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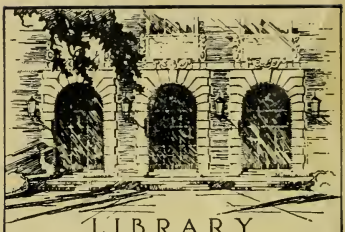

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TRADITION OF THE CASTLE.

Printed by J. Darling, Leadenhall-Street, London.

THE

TRADITION OF THE CASTLE;

OR,

SCENES IN THE EMERALD ISLE.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY

REGINA MARIA ROCHE,

AUTHOR OF

THE CHILDREN OF THE ABBEY, VICAR OF LANSDOWN, MAID OF THE HAMLET, &c.

"Oh Erin, my country! though sad and forsaken,
In dreams I revisit thy sea-beaten shore;
But, alas! in a far foreign land I awaken,
And sigh for the friends who can meet me no more."

VOL. III.

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THE

TRADITION OF THE CASTLE.

CHAPTER I.

"We may hold it as an established maxim, that as no one was ever so completely wretched as not to have some intervals of joy, so no one was ever so happy as not to have some portion of bitterness mingled with the sweets of life."

LADY Jane, never forgetful of any thing that concerned her own interests, failed not to take an opportunity of mentioning to sir William the secret visits of Donaghue to the Vale; but though she was decided on doing so, in the most invidious manner, she, at the same time, wished to do so in such a way as should

excite no displeasure in the breast of Miss Erin, or create any suspicion of the fact. Accordingly, one morning that they chanced to be sitting together, that is, she, sir William, and Miss Erin, affecting to have forgot the date of a newspaper, in which she pretended there was something she wanted sir William to peruse—"Let me see, let me see," she said, musing, "what morning it was I read that paper—oh! ay, now I recollect, it was the very morning, my dear," turning to Miss Erin, "in which you met Mr. O'Brien in the grotto; so you may know from that how many days ago it is."

"Met Mr. O'Brien in the grotto! my daughter meet Mr. O'Brien in the grotto!" repeated sir William, in a tone of utter astonishment, not unmingled with indignation.

"Oh dear, yes," said lady Jane, with affected innocence, "that—that is—I mean," pretending to stammer, in order to have an appearance of confusion, while Miss Erin blushed up to the very temples, and

trembled with agitation—"I—I mean by chance; for it was entirely owing to that, that Mr. O'Brien said he came there."

"At all events, whether it was or not, it was to chance, I am convinced," said sir William, in a still more indignant tone, and pacing the room in evident discomposure, "that Miss Erin's meeting him there was owing."

"Assuredly," said Miss Erin, making an effort to recover herself; though not without darting an angry glance at lady Jane, for what she conceived her girlish inadvertence, for she knew not how to impute to any thing else what had occurred —"And I am equally certain that the meeting was as much a matter of surprise to Mr. O'Brien as it was to me."

"To be sure," said lady Jane, as if the remark had been addressed to her; "how can that be doubted when he said so himself? and really," laughing immoderately, "he gave the most amusing account of the chance that brought him to the grotto;

for, in the first place, only think of his being such an absent creature as not to know whither he was going, and, in the next, of his letting little Bill be his guide!" and she told the story of the day in a way well calculated to have it turned into ridicule, and create a belief of its being owing to a consciousness that made him fear suspicion, taking care, of course, to give no hint of the looks, or sneers, or inuendoes, that forced him to give the explanation she now, by her manner, appeared so evidently to deride.—"I couldn't help rallying him," she invidiously continued, "on the lucky chance, or instinct, or whatever else he pleased to call it, that always brought him to the exact spot where he could be serviceable, and just at the critical moment; as for instance, when this dear creature here met with that frightful accident, and then again, the other morning, when she was taken so ill in the grotto; so that really it would almost tempt one to imagine he was always wandering about here by himself, if one could possi-

bly account for his wishing to make a secret of what there is not the slightest necessity for, from his acquaintance with the family."

"Ill do you say?" cried sir William, catching at what she had said of the indisposition of his daughter—"Eveleen ill!—the other morning in the grotto, and nothing mentioned of the circumstance! —really this seems altogether an extraordinary affair—such silence, such mystery about it."

"Indeed, my dear father," said Miss Erin, in a tone perfectly collected, though still more provoked with lady Jane, going up to him, and taking him by the hand, "it was not worth, at least so I thought, mentioning;" and she proceeded to explain, that while breakfast was preparing she had strolled to the grotto, and hearing the dog bark, had come out from the inner apartment, when she found the person he was jumping about was Mr. O'Brien, who was just retiring, being in a hurry, as was afterwards ascertained, to get home,

owing to an engagement he had there, when she was seized with a—a dizziness (here she did perhaps hesitate for an instant), that rendered his support needful for a minute or two. "And this was all," she added; "and I am sure you will allow not of sufficient consequence to mention."

"Assuredly," involuntarily escaped the lips of sir William; but he could not, or rather would not, have refrained from saying what he thought; and let it be who it might that deserved to be accused or suspected of duplicity, or want of openness in their conduct, he felt exultingly convinced, from this simple little detail, that it was not his Eveleen; and in the joy of his heart at the conviction, kissed her polished forehead. What an addition to his happiness would it have been, could he equally have acquitted others of these! Various circumstances indeed had combined to render him highly interested about Donaghue, and inspire him with a sincere and fervent wish that he might be found worthy of that sincere friendship he

desired to evince towards him. But the invidious insinuations of lady Jane, or rather, the inferences they led to, were not thrown away upon him. Anxious to cultivate the regard of his daughter, but ignorant of his real sentiments, Donaghue might have been led to decline the invitations to the Vale, for the purpose of letting all suspicion about him cease, while, in secret, he sought to win her regard, but in such a way, so much through seeming accident, as would, probably, prevent their meetings being mentioned, where the cause of them might be suspected, or could not be without injury.

Should this be proved to be the case—should it really be ascertained that he was capable of such degrading artifice, sir William resolved, from that moment, to endeavour to forget there was such a being in existence. But no, he would not give way to an apprehension of the kind; it might, it probably was, exactly as the young man himself had represented, though the decisive manner of lady Jane, who

was certainly keen and penetrating, seemed to imply the contrary. But come, was all fair and clear about her ladyship? Might not the spleen of jealousy have led to her speaking as she had done? for sir William had not been without hearing of the *penchant* with which her ladyship had once honoured the gentleman, or that it was generally supposed it would not, if he pleased, be a very difficult matter to occasion its renewal. But, in short, sir William was of a disposition and way of thinking that always inclined him to lean to the favourable side, and put the best construction on every thing. Aware of the fallibility of human judgment, he never could avoid remembering the necessity there was for our closely investigating every circumstance, ere we allowed ourselves to form a final judgment upon any; so convinced was he of this, that he never suffered himself to be easily biassed or prejudiced against any one; no matter whether friend or foe, they were equally entitled to be considered innocent, till ir-

refragable proof to the contrary was adduced. In this way he resolved to consider Donaghue, and believed he should be able; but the poison of suspicion is unconsciously imbibed. From the moment of lady Jane's communication, he became restless and uneasy; if he rode out, he was sure of returning with precipitancy, and if he kept walking about the grounds, which he now often did for the whole of a day, he failed not of asking every one he met something about Donaghue; but he heard little of him, and saw less; for after what had occurred at the grotto, and the construction which lady Jane seemed maliciously determined on putting on it, prudence compelled Donaghue, for some days, to refrain from approaching the Vale; but one morning he thought he should like to amuse himself with angling in a trout stream that lay in its vicinity. The thought had no sooner occurred than matters were quickly prepared for the purpose; and taking his fishing-rod in his

hand, and giving the basket, with his tackle, to Neptune, that eagerly snapt it up between his ivory teeth, he set out. But it so happened, that by the time he reached the stream, all inclination for angling was over; he wished, however, to rest himself for a while, but there was no pleasant seat or shelter here; yet the mountains, amidst which the stream ran, were smooth and verdant, and in some places projected so far as to cast a shadow on the path; but, somehow, Donaghue did not like stopping here; a little further on was an entrance to the Vale, and in one of its delightful bowers, indeed, it would be a luxury to repose for a short time; and so, after a faint struggle with it, he suffered inclination to get the better of every other consideration, as is but too often the case with many, and entered the forbidden ground, closely followed by Neptune, with the basket still between his teeth.

He had not advanced very far, when, through some flowering thickets, he espied a beautiful circular building, raised on

a gentle elevation; he immediately, though cautiously, made his way to it, and having ascertained that there was no one within it, ventured to ascend the steps on which it stood, and take possession of an inner apartment, furnished with sofas and small reading-tables, and elegantly ornamented; here he had been for some time, literally indulging all to thought, when Neptune, who having set down his basket, had stretched himself at his feet, to take a little nap, suddenly started up with a wag of his tail, and, at the same moment, Miss Erin was seen tripping up the steps.

To describe what the embarrassment of Donaghue was at this moment would be impossible; though to see her was the wish of his soul, yet to be surprised thus, continually intruding, as it should seem, where he ought not, was not endurable; and rather than it should have happened again, he could have wished himself a thousand miles off; but there was no help for it; he looked about him, but there was no

way of escape, and he strove, but certainly in vain, to collect himself.

But if he was confused at what had happened, not less so was Miss Erin. She stopped for an instant, not merely through surprise, but from something of dismay at beholding him, but too well aware of the confirmation his thus continuing to visit the place clandestinely might, if discovered, be of the suspicions which, it was but too evident, lady Jane had infused into her father's mind respecting him. Making an effort, however, to recover her presence of mind, from a hope and trust that what she was apprehensive of might not be the case, she proceeded to ask Donaghue whether he had found any one in the building, saying, when she had left it a short time before, to feed some favourite peacocks she had near it, she had left some friends there.

Donaghue replied in the negative, adding, that if he had ascertained any one being there, he certainly should not have thought of entering it.—"But my being

certain there was not, does not, however, I feel convinced," he continued, "exempt me from the necessity of making an apology for what, I am aware, must be considered an intrusion; but I don't know how it has happened, that I have lately been so unfortunate as to be continually acting in a manner to incur the imputation; to prevent any thing so disagreeable, I really could wish that sir William would bar his enchanting grounds to all strangers."

"Then I am sure, if he did," replied Miss Erin, with one of her most bewitching smiles, "he would not bar them against you; though, indeed," recollecting the resolve she had made, to take advantage of the first opportunity that occurred, for speaking to him on the subject of his declining the overtures that were made to induce him to visit at the Vale, "I cannot avoid observing, now that you have brought it to my mind, that it seems to be your wish that we should all here consider you in the light of a stranger. How is it, Mr. O'Brien, that we never see you

at the house? of the pleasure—rather let me say the happiness, my mother would derive from the circumstance, you cannot, I think, be a stranger; and as to my father, he must himself, I should suppose, have satisfied you on this head."

Donaghue, who, at the mention of her mother, involuntarily opened his lips, to try and make some excuse for what she thus gently reproached him for, at this allusion to her father—her cold, her unfeeling father, who, under a specious shew of complaisance, had done so much to wound his feelings, started back, with an expression of haughty emotion that did not escape her.—" Why, surely," she resumed, after earnestly regarding him for a minute in silence, " no one can have misled—no one can have prejudiced——" but ere she could finish the sentence, Neptune, that, during this short scene, still keeping watch over his basket however, had been sitting, apparently admiring both of them, gave a sudden bark, and sprang towards the door,

and both turning to it, in consequence, they beheld sir William Erin entering.

Unutterable was the confusion of both at the instant. Donaghue, without having heard any thing of lady Jane's invidious insinuations, was perfectly aware of the awkwardness there was in being thus found conversing, in private, with Miss Erin, while he declined opportunities of doing so in public; and Miss Erin, acquainted with these insinuations, trembled to think of the confirmation they might now receive. Of her father's giving way to any idea injurious to her, she had no apprehension, but she could not indulge the same confidence with regard to Donaghue, and her agitation was exceedingly extreme.

"Don't let me disturb you, sir," said sir William, stiffly bowing to Donaghue, who, rather through the confusion he was thrown into, by his unexpected entrance, or his eagerness to fly him, had begun to scramble up his gloves, fishing-rod, and hat, all of which he had carelessly thrown on the floor, as he rested himself on a sofa.

"You don't, sir," replied Donaghue; "having apologized to Miss Erin for being found here, I was on the point of departing as you entered."

"Yes," said Miss Erin, catching at what seemed to give an opening for an explanation, "Mr. O'Brien has been making quite as serious an affair of being found resting himself here, after his long, fatiguing walk, this warm morning, to the mountains, as if he knew not that the grounds were open to visitors; and I—I," continued she, a little disconcerted by perceiving no relaxation in her father's muscles, "I have been asking him why he makes himself so great a stranger at the house."

"Indeed! I should have conceived the question superfluous; for, from the overtures he has received to visit there, I should have presumed he would have done so, if agreeable."

Donaghue coloured like crimson, at the cold, repelling tone in which these words were uttered; his heart heaved with in-

dignant feelings, and involuntarily casting a look of bitter reproach on sir William, was abruptly departing, when Miss Erin, still anxious to effect what she wished, stopped him, by saying she wanted to let her father notice his dog—"The fine creature, my dear sir," she said, patting the head of Neptune as she spoke, and beginning to give him some cakes from off one of the tables, "to which I am so much indebted—is he not a noble animal?"

The features of sir William now, indeed, relaxed—"A noble one," he said, "indeed!" laying his hand on the head of the dog. "Should his master ever get tired of him——"

"Tired!" repeated Donaghue, in a tone of indignation, as if at the bare possibility of such a thing—"tired of a creature, exclusive of every other consideration, that was the means of preserving——" He stopped, checked by the rising blush on Miss Erin's cheek, from giving further utterance to his feelings at the moment; but he had said enough to betray them, and

but too fearful of this, he again became confused, and hastily repeating his parting bow, was out of sight in a minute.

Well now, after this, what remained to be done, but indeed decidedly to shun every place where he was likely to meet Miss Erin—to resolutely avoid every path where it was probable the impress of her steps could be traced. Yet to deny himself—to give up the only gratification he now allowed himself, or rather the only thing from which he derived any gratification, that of frequenting the scenes with which her idea was associated! but it must be done; there was no other method of clearing—of redeeming himself from the degrading imputation of having frequented them for the purpose of throwing himself in her way—an opinion which, it was evident to him, sir William entertained, and which, no doubt, made him highly applaud himself for the cold, calculating caution with which he had previously acted towards him. He returned home in a state of agitation and abstraction, that

rendered his movements absolutely mechanical; in this way he continued walking up and down the parlour, unmindful of Rosebud, whom he found sitting there, looking over some English newspapers, which he had just collected at the Vale. The doctor, however, was not equally unmindful of him; he soon perceived he was under some great disturbance of mind; and, from some broken sentences that, from time to time, unconsciously escaped him, almost as quickly understood what the cause of this disturbance was. For some time he continued to watch him quietly; at length, unable longer to control or contain himself—"Ah, boy, boy!" he exclaimed, suddenly starting from his chair, and throwing aside the papers, "is this the way you are going on, making a fool of yourself about one woman, when there are perhaps twenty others her equal, that you might have by only asking!"

"Her equal!" repeated Donaghue, in a tone of lofty contempt, quite forgetting,

in the indignation excited by the suggestion, that he was, by this reply, admitting the fact of which he was accused by the doctor, that of being violently in love with some one.

"Yes, her equal!" returned the doctor: "I allow the lady in question—for it's useless any longer to conceal, Donaghue, that I have, for some time past, being perfectly aware of the state of your heart—to be very beautiful, and very amiable, and, of course, very deserving of admiration; but then it does not follow, that, in allowing this, I do not think others equally so. God help us all! if there were only one Helen at a time in the world, the wars between the Grecian and Trojan worthies would be nothing to the wars we should have then amongst us; though I am aware, for the time being, every lover esteems his mistress a Helen. Yet, go where we will, be thrown on what coast we may, where is the place where beauty, and merit, and agreeableness, may not be found? and how consolatory should the

reflection be to a person suffering, as he conceives, under a hopeless passion, if a man will but open his eyes!"

"Consolatory!" said Donaghue, "what, when he would not, if he could, divest himself of the idea of her he loves?"

"Pshaw! this is the rant of romance. If I long for a thing that is unattainable, can I give a better proof of sense, than by endeavouring to banish the thoughts of it as speedily as possible from my mind?"

"No, not an idea that while cherished in the mind must preserve it from any thing that is base and degrading, by keeping alive in it the recollection of what is lovely and excellent; while it dwells with delight on the idea of these, it is not probable it will become perverted and debased."

"Pshaw!" exclaimed the doctor again; "but I see there's no arguing rationally with a man who is an enthusiast in every thing, as you are; when advancing life, however, has a little chilled the glow of blood that occasions this, I make no doubt

you'll allow I have not been incorrect in my observation."

"Without waiting till then, I allow it now, notwithstanding what you have accused me of being."

"Not without reason," rejoined the doctor; "now do acknowledge that also."

"Well, supposing I do," said Donaghue, with a smile, "may I not retort the charge on you? for if warm friendships, a zeal in the cause of humanity that nothing can cool, nothing intimidate, a readiness to brave every thing, even without solicitation, in the cause of the helpless and the oppressed, be not enthusiasm, I know not what is. Let neither, therefore, my dear doctor, blush to be accused of it. The vulgar rail at, and sneer at it, because they do not understand it; to them it means nothing more than folly, or madness, or the extravagance of Hotspur, that would make us attempt to 'pluck bright honour from the pale-faced moon;' but the feeling and the enlightened comprehend it better. As sensibili-

ty is the source inexhausted of all that is precious in our joys, and costly in our sorrows, so are they aware that this is the stimulus to whatever is great and glorious in our actions; or, in other words, that nothing ever great or glorious was attempted without it; and that, therefore, to strike this spirit out of the human constitution, would be to check some of the main wheels of society; since, if enthusiasm did not add, at least an imaginary, value to most of the objects of our pursuits—if fancy did not give them her magical colouring, they would generally be found too contemptible perhaps to excite ardent desire."

"Ay, this is all very fine," said the doctor, not however displeased at the compliment that had been paid him; "but it won't, for all that, divert me, Donaghue, from speaking on a subject that I have long been anxious to converse with you on—that of your giving way to a passion that must be hopeless."

"Must!" repeated Donaghue, with ex-

cessive emotion. " But why allow myself to be disturbed at hearing what I was before but too sensible of?—Yes, my dear doctor, since your penetration has enabled you to dive into the secret of my heart, I will own I love, with all the ardour of my nature, but love despairingly."

" Then why, in the name of common sense," said the doctor, " encourage a passion you confess to be hopeless?"

" Encourage it!" said Donaghue.

" Yes, must you not confess it is encouraging it, to be continually wandering, hovering about the residence of Miss Erin, and putting yourself in the way of meeting her?"

" But how can I help it?" asked Donaghue, in a fit of despair. " How can I resist the impulse that hurries, that forces me there, whether I will or not?"

" Faith, I dont know," said the doctor, musing; " and yet—no—let me think. You have read the works of Alfieri, and doubtless recollect the expedient he had recourse to, for freeing himself from a pas-

sion doubtless as distressing as yours—This is what he says on the subject—'I devised,' says he, 'the following expedient, to render me wise, by force—to detach me from this unfortunate fit of love: keeping from the sight of the object of it, I deemed of the greatest consequence; but how was that to be done? my passion was urging me every moment to seek her society. Whenever the paroxysms were on me, I got my servant to bind me to an arm-chair; the cords were concealed under a large mantle, in which I was enveloped, and only one hand remained at liberty. Of all those who came to see me, not one suspected I was bound down in that manner. I remained in this situation for whole hours; my servant was my gaoler, who was alone intrusted with the secret, and he liberated me when the rage of love was over; thus, in the course of a short time, I was completely cured, and thus rendered myself wise by force.' Now the only thing I see for it,"

continued the doctor, " is to have recourse to a similar mode of cure for you. Whenever you find the love fit coming on you, urging you to fly off like another Cardenio, to the woods and wilds of sir William, only give me a hint; and as from this time forth I shall always take care to have a strong cord at hand—nay, you needn't laugh, for, upon my soul, I am serious!—I will immediately bind you to one of these great chairs, till it is over, and thus, as the poet says, make you wise by force."

" Thank you, my dear doctor; however, I shall try if I cannot, by the exertion of resolution, save you from this trouble."

" Well, if you don't like this method of cure, there's another, certainly preferable, from being pleasanter. Let sir William give the heiress to whom he pleases; and do you put it out of your power to think any more about her, by taking the widow."

" How!" exclaimed Donaghue, in extreme surprise.

" Tut! this is all folly. Do you think

no one can see but yourself, Donaghue? do you think I don't know you might have lady Jane Magennis by to-morrow, if you pleased? and a devilish fool you'll be if you don't take her; for she's not only a fine creature, but what is still better, in my opinion, a funny creature; and has besides, that which, according to the vulger adage, 'will make the mare trot, and the mill go,' a swinging fortune, left her by old Cent.-per-cent; God knows how got—but that is not our consideration."

"Never!" cried Donaghue, with vehemence—"Never!"

"Never!" repeated the doctor, with indignation.

But ere we proceed farther, it may be necessary to observe, that lady Jane had artfully managed so as to draw the doctor to her side; she soon penetrated into his character, and ascertained his great regard for Donaghue, and was led, by the double discovery, to believe she could render him instrumental to her designs. Having laid

herself out, as much as she could, to establish herself in his good graces, by humouring his whims, laughing at his jests, and promoting his frolics, she by degrees made him her confident, by disclosing what she called her own story; she represented the attachment that had, as she said, subsisted between her and Donaghue, her being compelled to marry another, in consequence of his loss of fortune, and her readiness to prove, as she had intimated to him, that this was owing to compulsion, by bestowing on him the fortune she had obtained by this marriage; and finally concluded by imploring Rosebud, as a mutual friend, to interfere between them, nor suffer him to let a wild pursuit after Miss Erin, entered into out of resentment, as she well knew, of her (lady Jane's) supposed inconstancy, to induce him to give up the good he might secure, since he might be convinced, that however liberal and generous sir William Erin might seem, or be reported to be, he might rely on it he was too worldly a man ever to be

prevailed on to give his daughter, for whom he had a right to entertain such expectations, to a man in his circumstances; and Rosebud, interested by her detail, and firmly believing the truth of all she said, readily gave the promise she required, and had for some time been on the watch for an opportunity of beginning the operations it had decided him on, not without a strong sense of indignation against Donaghue for the folly, the obstinacy, that rendered any interference on the subject necessary. To have fortune absolutely wooing him, offering to restore to him all that he had lost, and yet perversely to refuse profiting by the circumstance—it was really bad enough to drive even a Job himself mad.—"Never!" he cried, repeating the emphatic "never" of Donaghue. "Is it, can it be possible, that you are in your senses, and yet reject this noble, this generous creature, ready to fling herself and her fine fortune into your arms?"

"Very," replied Donaghue.

"And pray may I ask what may be the reason?"

"Because I am not sufficiently attached to her to requite the disinterestedness you ascribe to her."

"Tut! tut! let me hear nothing of this romantic nonsense," said the doctor, impatiently. "No, no, it is not owing to that, but because there is not sufficient difficulty in this affair to make it interesting to you. I will answer for it, that were lady Jane still under the control of a harsh arbitrary father, you would be quite as mad about her as you now seem cool and easy. Upon my soul, Donaghue, you almost remind me of the girl in the farce, who would only elope to her lover through the window, though the hall door was lying open!"

"Well, if it amuses you to think so of me," said Donaghue, "you are perfectly welcome."

"No, it does not amuse me; quite the contrary—it sets me wild, to think that through your obstinacy in persisting in the

pursuit of what may well be termed a shadow, you will probably lose the substance; for, with your good sense, can you possibly persuade yourself that sir William Erin will ever be prevailed on to give his heiress to—to—a——"

"I understand you," said Donaghue, flushing up to the temples, and in evident emotion turning to a window.—"There's no occasion my dear doctor," he resumed, after standing there a minute to recover himself, "to be more explicit. No, I am too well aware of the romantic folly sir William Erin would be accused of, were he to bestow his daughter on a man like me, to suppose him capable of harbouring an idea of the kind."

"Nay, there would be no folly in the case," said the doctor; "only these men of the world are so selfish—so——But I see I have hurt you, Donaghue, and I could shoot myself at the thought. But will you not forgive me?" pleadingly extending his hand. "You know my regard for you, and must therefore, I think,

be convinced that whatever I have said has originated in my anxiety to see you restored to your proper enjoyments in life."

"My dear doctor," as he warmly grasped his hand, "after the many proofs of friendship I have experienced from you, how could I possibly entertain a doubt of that? No, I must be stupid and ungrateful indeed, after what has occurred, if I could ascribe what you have said to any thing but the real motive—a sincere anxiety about my welfare. But do not be offended at my asking you to let the present subject drop. From interested motives I never will marry, and as, from the reverse of fortune I have met with, it would not be prudent to marry from any other, I believe we may as well shake hands at once, as brother bachelors."

"No, no, Donaghue, that must never be," cried the doctor; "there is a wide difference between you and me. You, born and brought up in the very midst of domestic enjoyments, early acquired that taste and fondness for them that must

ever prevent an unsettled and unconnected state from being one of real pleasure to you; whereas I, deprived of the shelter of a natural home ere I well knew what the comforts of one were, became, through the force of habit, so attached to a life that would allow of change of scene, whenever one pleased, without trammels of any kind to oppose, as to prefer it to any other. But though Benedict himself, before he fell into the snares of the lady Beatrice, never more strenuously stood up in the defence of bachelors than I do, yet no one can be better pleased than I am to see a friend resigning the title of one, provided I be assured it is for his happiness to lose it."

Here the entrance of the corporal, with a large packet from Teghadow, put an end to the conversation; and while the doctor, who was impatient about every thing, set about examining the contents of this, Donaghue, taking up his hat, strolled out to try if a quiet walk would enable him to get

the better of the extreme perturbation of spirits under which he still laboured.

CHAPTER II.

"Oh! thou soft natural death (that art joint twin
To sweetest slumber), no rough-becrested comet
Stares on thy mild departure; the dull owl
Beats not against thy casement; the hoarse wolf
Scents not thy carrion: pity winds thy corse—
While horror waits on princes."

As he was sauntering on, lost in thought, the voice of a woman soliciting charity roused him from his abstraction.—"Ah! then won't your honour be after giving something to a poor woman, towards burying her husband?"

Donaghue put a few tenpennies into her hand, and was about trying to discover whether she required further relief —there being something very shocking to his feelings, in the idea of a wife being obliged to quit the deathbed of a husband,

to procure the means of interring him—when her attention was suddenly diverted from him by the approach of a funeral; and—"Ah, then sure," she exclaimed, "if there isn't father Murphy himself! Well, I hope, any how, he won't be keeping me long; for ould Barney was at the last gasp; and he won't die *contínted* without seeing his reverence."

"Barney! Who is Barney?" demanded Donaghue.

"Sure, and plase your honour, it's my husband you gave me the money for."

"Your husband! why I thought you told me he was dead?"

"*Och hone*, jewel, it's all the same thing, so I am *gitting* ready every thing in time, to have ould Barney *gin*teelly waked; and all that's wanting now is father Murphy, to give him his blessing before he departs; for I got the pot down before I came out to wash him; and I have got a *lind* of a white sheet, and bespoke the pipes and the snuff, and the ——But I'll run home, and try to keep

Barney alive till the priest comes; for I know he won't die happy without seeing him; and one would wish to make the *crater* as comfortable as they could, going to the other world. So a thousand thanks to your honour for your goodness, and when you die, may you be sure of a good wooden great-coat!"

It had often struck Donaghue before, and from the conduct of this woman he was now confirmed in the observation, that he had never any where met with people so totally unconcerned about death as his own country people—that is, of the lower description—whether speaking of their own, or that of a friend, or relation's, speaking of it with the same coolness; and as they certainly wanted not natural feeling, but were, on the contrary, extremely warm-hearted, and in general strongly attached to their kindred, he could only account for their seeming indifference about it on every occasion to the wretchedness of their lives in general, and their being naturally led by this to think, that that

which relieved them from further poverty and toil, was more to be welcomed than dreaded.

The funeral just mentioned passed onward to the old burying-ground of a ruined church; a crowd attended, amongst which were several old women close to the coffin, that kept howling as they followed it—"Ah, then, why did you die? it was himself that was good to the poor—ah, then, why did you die? that fed ould and young, no matter who came—ah, then, why did you die?" in this way detailing his praises, and still, at the end of each sentence, uniting in the chorus of "ah, then, why did you die?"

The ceremony of interment was soon over, simply consisting of lowering the coffin into the grave, and which was no sooner done, than friends, relatives, mourners, all, in a moment, dispersed, as if by magic, leaving an old man, who acted as sexton, to quietly proceed, by himself, in his work of filling up the grave, when Donaghue, who had almost mechanically

followed, and continued loitering about the churchyard, examining the inscriptions upon some of the old tombstones, was surprised by hearing the voice of the old woman who had solicited charity from him, concluding, from what she had told him of her husband, that she could not, or rather would not, have delayed returning to him.

"*Och hone!* oh! but it's himself that had the *iligint* wake of it," she cried, addressing herself to the old man who was shovelling the earth into the grave—"it's himself that ought to be satisfied and con*tin*ted, and, to be sure, so he is, for it's he that had every thing that was comfortable about him—but why not? he left her the means to give it him; and as his wife knew he liked the g*in*teel thing when he was living, so she might be sure he would when he was dead. But the widow Walsh is the ould thing for ever! sorrow doubt of it, he couldn't have left his money to a better. There was the twelve priests there this morning, as well as last night, in the par-

lour next the one where the corpse was laid out so iligantly, eating and drinking the best of every thing. I looked through the window, and, *och hone!* what a piece of beef I saw, and fowls, and a leg of mutton, and a could leg of pork, with twenty other things on the table before them; besides *the tay*, and *the coffee*, and the wine, and the whiskey galore; it's themselves, no shame to them, that were making good use of them all. And then there was the widow, sitting at the head of the corpse—and a handsome corpse, I will say that for you, Jack Walsh, though you can't hear a word of what I am saying now, you made of it—dressed all in her best; and 'tis she that has the *iligint* gowns and caps to put on here, with the keeners all about her, and——"

"My good woman," here interrupted Donaghue, who had gradually approached her, and could no longer contain himself, from the terrible idea of what her wretched husband might be suffering, through her idle curiosity and love of prating, "you

seem to me, in talking of the widow Walsh's dead husband, to have quite forgot your own unfortunate living, or rather dying one."

"*Och hone!* no, your honour, I am just going to him, and sure I was just going to him when I parted from your honour, but that when I saw the funeral, I could not help turning back with it, not to draw ill-luck upon myself, nor more nor that, when I found it was Jack Walsh, stopping to see him put in the ground, *becase* I knew it's himself that would have done the same by me, only he went first. But stop a bit; sure there are two *berrings* coming—ah! then what luck I was in, not to have gone home before!"

Here a violent uproar drew the attention of Donaghue from her, and, at a little distance, he actually beheld two funerals. They had suddenly met, and a scuffle was the result, to see which should get first to the churchyard. In the course of it, one of the coffins was thrown to the ground; two men instantly darted for-

ward, and whipping it up between them, ran forward with it as fast as possible to the place of interment, when popping it into the first grave they came to, they set up a shout of exultation, waving their hats on high, in token of triumph.

"Good Heavens! what is the meaning of all this?" inquired Donaghue of the old man.

"Why, plase your honour, 'tis the custom here, when one funeral takes place, always to keep watch in the churchyard till there is another, and so on; and so, when there are two at a time, there's always a struggle to see which shall get first to the burying-ground on that account. The country, as your honour, I dare say, knows, was once overrun with wolves, that used to come down—the Lord save us!—before the body was well laid in the earth, to scratch it out of it; and so, to hinder this, the people, at last, were forced to keep watch over the graves till the grass grew upon them, and the custom has been kept up ever since."

The old woman seemed in an absolute ecstacy at the exploit that had just taken place.—" Well, success to yourselves, boys!" she said; " you are the ones for doing the thing nately. It's yourselves that have given them the proper good-bye ginteelly."

" My good woman," again said Donaghue, provoked, beyond expression, by her conduct, after what she had told him—" if you do not return home immediately, I shall certainly suspect you of being an impostor, and act accordingly."

This threat, or intimation, had the desired effect; she directly quitted the churchyard, and was followed by Donaghue, determined to ascertain the truth. He had not, however, advanced many yards into the road again, when he heard Rosebud calling to him from a field at some little distance. The doctor still fearing he was not entirely reconciled to him, had hastily shuffled up the papers he left him looking over, and learning which way he was gone, set out in pursuit of him.

Donaghue hastened to him, and thus the old woman effected her escape from him; for, on turning to look for her, after joining the doctor, she was out of sight. He related what had just happened, to the no small amusement of Rosebud, who was particularly diverted by his account of the old woman, and the absolute horror with which she had inspired him.

They were near the beach, and now proceeded thither, to view some very singular and romantic rocks and caverns; they were a good while in viewing them, and examining the different species of plants and grass that tufted or bespread them, and in their way back, were overtaken by a heavy shower, that drove them into a cabin for shelter. Two three-legged stools were immediately dusted for them, by a poor little girl, and placed before the fire, over which an immense-sized iron pot was suspended.

"Ah ha!" said Rosebud, regarding it, "there is something good going on here;

a christening, or a wedding, for this pot is too large for murphies alone."

"*Och hone!* and sure your honour may well say that; the sorrow praty, or any thing else we have to put in it! only just some water we are warming to wash ould Barney in," and Donaghue instantly recognised his recently-made acquaintance, the old woman, emerging from a kind of inner division of the hovel, as she spoke.

"Why is your husband really dead at last?" he demanded.

"*Och!* it's all the same thing, your honour; he can't live, any how, now above a minute or two."

"My God, what callousness!" exclaimed Donaghue; "to be preparing for a man's death ere his last debt is paid!"

"Oh, then! sure his last debt was paid long enough ago—for sorrow one would trust ould Barney for any thing! so the sorrow debt at all, at all, he had to pay."

"Directed by her looks, Donaghue approached a dusky corner, where, on some straw, he saw a heap of heaving rags, for

nothing else could he distinguish. Inexpressibly shocked—" For Heaven's sake, my dear doctor, come here!" he cried, " and try whether any thing can be done for this miserable wretch."

The doctor obeyed, and after feeling his pulse for a little while, pronounced him to have just recovered from a kind of fit, occasioned by mere weakness; and ordering some milk to be warmed and immediately given to him, said, he had not the slightest doubt, by proper care, he might be brought about again.

No sooner had he swallowed the milk, than, recovering the power of speech, he raised himself a little on the straw, and began pouring down blessings on his two preservers, as he justly called them, for, but for their coming in as they did, he should have been a corpse by that time, as his wife and her cronies would not have waited another moment to wash and stretch him, and which he could not have prevented, as he had lost his strength and his speech at the same time, though he per-

fectly understood all they were doing and saying about him.

"Oh, then, Barney, are you really alive?" asked the wife, on seeing him sitting up. "Oh, then it's yourself that is!" for on getting within arm's length of him, he gave her a proof of his recovered vigour. "Well, to see that now! well, Nelly, jewel, it can't be helped; so, any how, run home with Mrs. Sullivan's white sheet, and tell her she needn't come to the wake this night, as ould Barney has disappointed us all; and be sure mind and tell Mrs. Murphy we shan't be wanting the whiskey, or snuff, or pipes, or tobacco, or candles, to-night, but we are in great expectation we shall in a day or two: and mind and till all the neighbours, going and coming, that the wake is put off. Run, run, jewel, gra! but stop, don't be forgetting to remimber to tell Nat Doyle not to be minding putting the boards together yet awhile for your daddy's coffin; and ah, then, why don't you run gra! but wait, here's the black ribbon Mrs. Rooney lent

me for my cap to-night. Ah, then! what's keeping you, Nelly?"

During the time these orders had been issuing, a little girl, about ten years old, barefooted, and flying in tatters, kept running backwards and forwards before the door, in the greatest seeming perplexity. The moment she at length found herself actually at liberty, she darted off, and was out of sight in a moment.

"Now, in the devil's name, Biddy," cried old Barney, evidently in a rage he could hardly control, "where did you git the money for all the things you just mintioned?"

"Ah! then where should I git it, but snug enough under your head?"

"Oh, then, be hanged to you! did you take the *tin tinpennies* I had in the stocking to pay the *rint*?"

"*Arrah!* be asy, Barney; sure I tould their honurs, deed nor alive, no one would trust you; and so to be sure I wint rummaging for the money, that I might let you have every thing snug and comfortable; 'for,'

says I to Mrs. Murphy, when I had got the purse, ''twill be the last *expinse*, and poor Barney always liked the *ginteel* thing."

" So, when you had taken all my money, you tould Mrs. Murphy I liked the ginteel thing, did you? Oh, then, you are in luk's way, that their honurs are here, for if it wasn't for them, I'd make you remember the ginteel thing the longest day you had to live, you *garron!*"

" Oh, Barney, my boy, don't let us be a hinderance to you," said Rosebud, highly amused by the scene; " don't let us stop your hand."

" Come, come, my friend," said Donaghue, interposing, on perceiving him about rising, " this should be a day of thanksgiving to you, not of anger and revenge. I have already given your wife some money, which I shall be much displeased if I find she does not lay out for your mutual comfort. As soon as I return to the castle, I will send a basket of provisions to you, and shall take care that, till your perfect recovery, you are attended to, when, if

not regularly employed, and I can be of any service to you, let me know, and I will see what can be done for you."

The miserable object of his benevolence looked wistfully at him for a minute, and then, without speaking, threw himself back, with a deep groan, on the bed.

They all thought him dying; but by a motion of his hand, he gave them to understand they were mistaken, and kept them away from him for a minute; then a little recovering himself—"No, no, it wasn't sick I was," he said, "it was only—only a pain I just got in my heart at the moment."

"A pain in your heart!" cried the wife; "oh then, Barney, if that's the way with you——"

"Stop," said Donaghue, in a tone of severity, anticipating what she meant to say.

"No," cried old Barney, "it wasn't sick I was again; but it was—it was—" and he gushed into tears, "that the young master should be so—so good to—

to a——But it's he that's of the right stock for that. There never yet was one of his race that wasn't good and gracious; and the more shame, and bitter curses on those that would hurt him! and I say, amen!"

Donaghue now understanding what it was he meant, that it was gratitude that had overcome him, spoke still more kindly to him, repeating his promise of his being his friend, if he only found him deserving of his being so.

On his return to the castle, Donaghue inquired about him, and learned that he belonged to Altoir-na-Grenie, and had for a long time enjoyed the situation of under bailiff there, but from which, as well as every other employment about the castle, he had been at length dismissed, through improper and disorderly conduct, since when he had gradually got down in life, till he had at length sunk into the most deplorable state of wretchedness.

What he heard to his disadvantage did not prevent Donaghue from keeping his

promise to him; he supplied him with whatever was needful, till he was entirely restored to health and strength, and would then have seen what farther could be done for him, but that Barney, on being sent for to the castle, respectfully excused himself, by saying he had received assistance, that rendered it unnecessary for him to trouble his honour for any farther kindness.

LIBRARY

CHAPTER III.

Spreading herbs, and flow'rets bright,
Glisten'd with the dew of night;
Nor herb, nor flow'ret glisten'd there,
But was carv'd in the cloister arches so fair;
The moon on the east oriel shone,
Through slender shafts of shapely stone,
By foliag'd tracery combin'd;
Thou wouldst have thought some fairy hand
'Twixt poplars straight, the ozier wand,
In many a freakish knot had twin'd,
Then fram'd a spell, when the work was done,
And chang'd the willow wreaths to stone.
The silver light, so pale and faint,
Shew'd many a prophet, and many a saint.

Lay of the last Minstrel.

DONAGHUE had now given up his haunts at the Vale; but though he forbore entering the grounds, he still indulged himself with a view of them, by making the ruined abbey, already mentioned in the description of the Vale, his now almost constant resort. Though, from the judicious

disposition of the grounds, it appeared to belong to the Vale, it was distinct from it, a circumstance that, of course, precluded all apprehension of being considered either as a transgressor or intruder, by frequenting it, if indeed his doing so should be discovered, which he conceived very unlikely, from the lonely situation of the pile, and the superstitious awe with which it was regarded in the neighbourhood; so that, except a chance visit of curiosity, it was never troubled with one. It stood in a narrow valley, full of wood, and through which a mountain stream took an irregular course, over a bed of stones, and fragments of rock, shivered from the steep cliffs above. In the middle were these ruins, which were evidently those of an extensive abbey, consisting of massy walls, buttresses, lofty arches, columns, and windows, with a great deal of beautiful tracery; trees and shrubs had started from amidst the rubbish, and spread their branches amidst the dilapidated towers and windows. The walls were in many

places completely covered with ivy, and in others thickly tufted with long streaming grass and flowers. The ivy, here and there breaking away from the walls, hung in thick groups of foliage between the trees; and altogether, the place was picturesque, solemn, and affecting. Every thing around it was in character with it, consequently, well adapted to keep alive, if not heighten, the sensations it inspired.

The surface of the Vale was covered with briars and thorns; the stream that ran murmuring through it was just sufficiently impeded in its course to create a melancholy sound; while the dark woods, that hung nearly inverted in some places, on the almost-perpendicular cliffs, threw a solemn gloom over the whole.

In wandering through the dilapidated walls, Donaghue had discovered part of a flight of stairs in one of the towers. He ascended it, and on gaining the second landing-place, found himself at the entrance of a long narrow gallery, that had connected this tower with another, and off

of which were several chambers, but now almost all in a state of irreparable ruin. Amongst them, however, he discovered one still habitable, and with a window looking down through the valley full upon Ashley Vale, and which, of course, presented to him a view he thought enchanting; and hither, in consequence, finding the remains of a seat or two here, and some pieces of wood, that could be used as a table, he brought some books and materials for writing and drawing, and gradually made it his favourite retreat, delighted with the romantic situation of the place, his perfect freedom here, from all apprehension of either being intruded on or intruding, the uninterrupted opportunity it allowed him for reflection, and above all, for gazing without suspicion on those enchanting shades, beneath which his imagination still pictured the form of her he loved. But not to its idle reveries were his hours here all devoted; he had furnished himself with means of passing them more rationally. Here he read

some of the best authors; here he committed to paper the sentiments and reflections they gave rise to; and here he sketched several beautiful landscapes, both from memory, and the immediate scenery before him. But perhaps the hour that prevented his finding a resource in any of these occupations, was not the least pleasing one to him for being at the ruins; the silent hour of eve, what time the " glowworm 'gins to light his pale and ineffectual fire," or when " the moon, apparent queen of all, with more pleasing light, shadowy sets off the face of things." But how, it may be asked, did he manage to pass so much of his time here without the knowledge of the doctor? but it should be remembered, the doctor was always on the wing for pleasure, and though, on finding that his leaving Donaghue to solitude had not had the intended effect, he would gladly have declined all further engagements for his sake, yet Donaghue, without appearing to oppose this, managed matters so as to prevent it; so that actual-

ly he was nearly as much master of his time as if he had not had a guest with him.

He had loitered here one evening to a later hour than usual, so lost in thought as perhaps to be unconscious of the circumstance, till his attention was suddenly caught by the moon, rising in splendid majesty above the wood-clad cliffs, and gradually dissipating the deep gloom that had but a moment before pervaded the scene; some parts still remained involved in masses of shade, but not so totally obscured that the eye could not penetrate to them, so as to be satisfied they consisted of separate and various parts, although their exact shapes and forms could not then be clearly defined. Donaghue contemplated the shadowy scene with feelings of indescribable admiration; its solemn, its soothing effect upon them was heightened by the still loneliness of the place and hour, that literally deepened the murmur in the woods, and the sound of the torrent in the vale;

while the drone of the beetle was heard in the cloisters, and the owl, ever and anon, rustling in his ivied bower, where he had long held his unmolested reign.

How long Donaghue might have continued lost in admiration of the scene before him, we cannot pretend to say; but he was suddenly roused from his contemplative posture, by the trembling sounds of a harp floating through the building. He started, and listened, as if imagining himself under some illusion of the imagination; but no, the sounds were distinct, though low and mournful; and it seemed to him, as if some fair daughter of sorrow waked her own sad tale from every trembling string. But could it actually be within the building? Yet, to hear the sound of such an instrument from any one of the buildings at the Vale, was utterly impossible; and the next question was, who the performer could possibly be. In other times, when there was hardly a mind that did not own the influence of superstition, this was a question that might probably

have been easily resolved; for Donaghue was not ignorant of the general belief that was entertained of the place being haunted, or the reports that prevailed of the sound of wailing and of music having been often heard within it. Some one from the Vale he felt persuaded it was, and from what he knew of the party there, he conceived there was not so great a probability of its being any one as Miss Erin herself. But how could he admit such a thought—how imagine any thing so wild, so improbable, so romantic, as that, at such an hour, she would frequent such a place? Romantic it certainly was, but neither so wild, nor so improbable as at first seemed to be the case, since, for an instant, he had not an idea that she came there by herself; and in short, the supposition was so pleasing, so captivating to his imagination, that he could not, would not persuade himself to relinquish it; for, should he do so, how totally devoid of interest would the place be, that but a few minutes before had been so delightful to him!

Leaving his own immediate retreat, he softly advanced into the gallery, and was cautiously proceeding in the direction of the harp, when it suddenly ceased. After waiting some time, without hearing it again, he hastened back to the stairs by which he ascended, in order to watch below for those he expected to see quitting the building. The music appeared to have come from the chapel, about which were various cells and cloistered galleries, denominated the friars' walks, from being the places, it was supposed, in which, when the weather would not permit their ranging abroad, or at times of rigid discipline, they used to meditate. Though hastening to decay, like the rest of the pile, it was still sufficiently perfect to allow imagination to supply what was lost, and form a just idea of what it must have been in its pristine days, when pealing anthems swelled the notes of praise within its lofty aisles, and golden censers flung their fragrant clouds around the shrines of saints and martyrs. Hither Donaghue

now bent his steps, convinced that it was by this those he expected to see must quit the building, and equally that they could not yet have done so, from the number of intricate passages they must have to traverse, according to the direction in which he heard the harp; but in vain, concealed in a dusky corner, he watched and waited, no one approached; neither voices nor footsteps were heard; nothing save again the murmur of the woods, and the continuous flow of the water; and at length, perplexed and impatient, he was on the point of rushing forward, to try whether his ear, or rather his imagination, had not deceived him, when a sudden recollection of the lateness of the hour, and the consequent uneasiness or alarm his protracted absence might occasion at the castle, induced him to check himself, and reluctantly depart. But the next morning he resolved on satisfying himself: the harp must remain, if he had not indeed been in a dream or trance, and was accordingly all impatience

for it; but, as is often the case with us, poor short-sighted mortals, he was impatient for that which was to bring him disappointment; for the doctor not only chose to give him his company the whole of this morning, but to dine with him, beginning indeed to experience something of remorse for having left him so much to himself; and from this feeling, would have remained with him for the evening, though he acknowledged, with a deep sigh, there was to be a delightful party at the Vale, had not Donaghue forced him to keep his engagement there, pretending that he had some matters to attend to that would oblige him to leave him.

The moment he was gone, Donaghue hastened from the castle, as if fearful, if he delayed an instant, he would return to prevent his going out, and cut across the fields, as usual, towards the Vale, by which he considerably shortened the distance to the abbey. It was late before the doctor left him, so that the gloom that pervaded the ruins by the time he reached them,

certainly rendered the exploit of traversing them rather a hazardous one; but what will not impatience, or a romantic imagination, lead us to do! In spite of all risks, Donaghue resolutely made his way to the place from whence he conceived the sound of the harp had issued; but no harp was now to be found there, nor the slightest trace or vestige of any human being having been recently in the place.

Donaghue for a moment was lost in perplexity, and inclined to believe that his ear had deceived him; but no, this was to admit that he had been in a trance or delirium; and all that was to be supposed was, that the harp had been removed. Well, this put an end to the expectation he had been indulging in all day, the soothing, the delightful expectation of again listening to Eveleen, and, unsuspected by her, catching a glimpse of her by the pale moonlight, and a listlessness, a feeling of disappointment came over him at the moment, that made him

languidly retrace his way back to the chapel. Just as he reentered it, from the range of cells, or dormitories above, the moon had begun to partially dispel the darkness in which it was shrouded. There was something in the partial dispersion of this, the capricious manner in which the beams tinged the surrounding objects, fully revealing some, and to others giving a character and shape not belonging to them, that gave such scope to the fancy, as involuntarily detained Donaghue on the spot, and awakened him again to a feeling of admiration. While yet he gazed around him, he started, under the idea of again hearing the trembling strings of a harp. He listened with all the intensity of attention. The sound presently became more distinct, so much so indeed, as to convince him it came from one of the upper cells, or cloisters, looking down upon, or rather into the chapel; and after a short symphony, a voice of exquisite sweetness sung the following verses:—

" When Nature form'd the human frame,
And view'd perfection's mould,
The eye its tend'rest care became
T' express the mind untold.

" Her universal language dwells,
Concise, correct, and pure;
That in one glance more clearly tells,
Than words could well ensure.

" Oh, precious orb, what equals thee,
Thou index of the mind?
With rapture I my Delia see,
And know that she is kind.

" The eye, where sense appears enthron'd,
Tells me she reads my heart;
And what my tongue would not have own'd,
Is thus made to impart.

" Her looks I watch, and know full well,
When joy or grief prevails;
Those beauteous orbs expressive tell
The passion that assails.

" Oh that the gods would soon decree,
And Delia's heart incline,
No mortal could so happy be,
Than I, to call her mine."

The voice ceased, and Donaghue became motionless, in expectation of hearing some one speak, or descending; but

he was disappointed—he neither heard footsteps nor voice again; but the instant after, the rush of garments, as of some one sweeping through the cloisters above, and then all was stillness, or dead silence again; and the solemn voice of waterfalls possessed the ear, and the moaning wind rustling through the long dark grass, and wild flowers, and ivy that begirt the place. Well, it was strange, but there must, of course, be some other way of quitting the chambers above, than he was aware of. Yet it was odd that such silence should have followed the singing; for that Miss Erin, or indeed any other female, should have come to such a place, at such an hour, by themselves, was an idea that was not admissible. But though persuaded no one remained, yet he continued to loiter, or rather could not prevail on himself to depart, till again the cruelty of awakening apprehension in the minds of those interested about him, induced him to leave the place.

That it was Miss Erin he had heard, he

could not allow himself to doubt, so much did the singing resemble hers; and yet, where or how had the harp been disposed of, that he had so vainly sought after? for he could not suppose that she had it carried backwards and forwards every moment, just as she felt a sudden whim or inclination to visit the place.

He could not refrain from endeavouring to learn something about her the next morning at breakfast from the doctor, as he had indeed done the preceding one. But the doctor could give him very little information. There had been a great deal of playing and singing amongst the young people, and he concluded of hers, and that was all he could tell him; for he had been engaged at cards the whole evening.

Donaghue resolved never to cease till he had discovered whether he was wrong or not, in his conjectures respecting her, and if not her, who it was he had heard; but any further attempts or efforts for the present were necessarily suspended, by the unexpected arrival of Melville.

CHAPTER V.

"————————Social friends,
Attun'd to happy unison of soul,
To whose exalted eye a fairer world,
Of which the vulgar never had a glimpse,
Displays its charms; whose minds are richly fraught
With philosophic store—superior light,
And in whose breast enthusiastic burns
Virtue, the sons of interest deem romance."

NOTHING but his absence from the country could have kept Melville so long from his friend; his regard for him was truly fraternal, and he now joined him, under the hope of inducing him to quit his solitude, and take up his quarters with him the ensuing winter at his uncle's house in town, who united with him in feeling a very sincere interest about him, and much anger and indignation against his own uncle, general O'Donaghue, for not having before this done something essential for him.

Donaghue was more pleased than surprised by his appearance, being perfectly satisfied that the moment he was at liberty to come to him, he should see him. The first joy of meeting over, Melville could not suppress a sensation of melancholy at the alteration which he noticed in the looks of his friend. To a romantic eye, perhaps, it might have made him appear more interesting, but to a person rationally interested about him, it gave serious concern and uneasiness. When he heard however the manner in which he passed his time, the solitude to which he seemed to have devoted himself, he could not wonder, however grieved he might be at what he witnessed; but a change should soon be effected, he determined: he avowed the determination, protesting he would never let him rest till he had made him return to his wonted habits, and resume his former intercourse with the world.—"For, at your period of life, to become a recluse, really the idea is not endurable!" and he spoke with something of indigna-

tion. Yet, at the very moment he did so, his soul was melting within him, at the recollection of other days—days of pleasure and delight—days that could not be recalled, and he now much feared could never be equalled; but exertions must be made; if Donaghue pined, as he much suspected, under a secret passion, either the pride that opposed obstacles to his seeking the attainment of the object of it must be combated, or else his good sense must be called into action, to enable him to overcome it. A thousand times he regretted not having joined him sooner, fearing, from the length of time he had been allowed to continue in solitude, he should find it a more difficult matter than he had at first imagined; but he would persevere, and the exertions of friendship must surely be crowned with success—sacred friendship, next to religion, the only real soother of our cares and sorrows here; for who has the power of calming, of allaying the passions equal to a friend? Our acquaintances, prompted by good-na-

ture and religion, may be kind, and even consoling to us, in the hour of bodily pain and sickness; but when the mind is tortured with anxiety—when the soul is torn by the infliction of baseness and ingratitude—when the heart is loaded with sorrows, that still it wishes to hide from the garish eye of day, where, but in the bosom of a friend, can we find relief?

Rosebud was delighted at the arrival of Melville, of whom he had heard so much from Donaghue, that he was actually well acquainted with him before he saw him, and now received him quite as an old friend; and Melville was previously made sufficiently acquainted with him, to be pleased at finding him at Altoir-na-Grenie, and more particularly so, when he found that in him he should have a ready auxiliary in his determination concerning Donaghue.

"And so, Donaghue, you actually do not visit at the Vale?" he cried, on their being left for a little while to themselves by the doctor. "I should have conceived

the family there the very kind of family to have allured you from your plan of seclusion."

Donaghue shook his head.

"Ay, you shake your head, but, like our friend Burleigh, say nothing, and for a very good reason, because you have nothing to say in vindication of your plan."

"What," said Donaghue, with a smile, "when I have the arguments of poets, philosophers, and sages to support me in it? I know what men of the world say against it — I know, that by adopting such a one, by withdrawing from society, they say, that, by degrees, we not only lose entirely our relish for it, but the habits of polished life become troublesome to us, till at length they are cast off; so that should a period arrive for claiming us back into our former situations, we not only shrink from the thronging fancies of what we may have to encounter, but may, to our sorrow, not be able to recover our lost ground. But, in reply to these observations, have we not to adduce the uninter-

rupted leisure and opportunity which seclusion affords us for study—for acquiring a knowledge of ourselves, and preparing for that change, towards which we are all progressively advancing?"

"Yes," replied Melville, "no one can dispute that occasional retirement is necessary—that to thoroughly understand the sense of what we read, to reap advantage from the studies we are pursuing, it is requisite we should, now and then, retreat into the calm shades of seclusion; but retirement and solitude are widely different—the one only prepares and qualifies us for appearing to advantage in life, the other estranges us from it, destroys our social habits, and, finally, engenders misanthropy; for those we shun, we gradually, I may almost say naturally, begin to dislike and fear. In short, total solitude, or complete seclusion, is what I utterly abhor, as inimical to all the social charities of life, and what, I am convinced, no one ever adopted, without heartily repenting, however pride may induce them to con-

ceal this repentance; for man is a social animal, and that love of our species that is implanted in us, and would voluntarily lead us to an intercourse with them, cannot be resisted or acted against, without the excitement of sensations that must be subversive of all contentment. Let any one only think what his feelings would be, if condemned to banishment from the world, and then ask why he should inflict on himself a punishment that would be so intolerable from another."

"Well, don't be alarmed," said Donaghue, again smiling; "whatever, in the first confusion of an unsettled mind, I might have half meditated, I am not yet going to renounce this wicked world. Seclusion has been so far of benefit to me, as to afford me a proper opportunity for recovering and collecting myself, and being thoroughly convinced, in consequence, that a life of supine indolence would, at my age, be indeed disgraceful and unsuitable, even if it accorded with my temper or inclination, which it does not by any

means. In a word, you shall find that I consider myself too green, yet awhile, to be cut down and made firewood of, as the moment my uncle arrives, I shall consult with him on the best plan for entering upon active service again."

"But why devote yourself to retirement till his return," demanded Melville, "and thus lose the intervening opportunities that might occur for reversing the scene, without his assistance? With your advantages of birth, of person, and educacation, there is no knowing, Donaghue, what, by this time, might have been the pleasing result of your having kept up your usual intercourse with the world: but there is nothing has exasperated me so much with you, as your declining to cultivate an intimacy at the Vale, where, from the sentiments, I am well aware, entertained of you by some of the family, I can hardly doubt but for your own fault ——"

"I understand you," said Donaghue,

interrupting him with much emotion; "but on that subject I must entreat your silence, my dear fellow. You are mistaken, indeed, in what you think; and when I tell you——" he stopped, checked the impulse that was hurrying him forward to detail what he knew, or rather had heard, and thought, in consequence, of sir William, and prevailed on himself not to speak to the prejudice of Eveleen's father.

"Well," replied Melville, "I will so far oblige you, as to say nothing on it, at least at present, only that I presume, out of complaisance to me, you will now and then honour the family at the Vale with your presence, as I must, occasionally, make my appearance there, which I will not however without you, except I wish to offend my uncle, whose oldest and most intimate friend, as I believe I have already told you, sir William Erin is."

"Well, well, we will talk about that," said Donaghue; "let us now start another topic. I have a thousand questions to ask you about your travels. This uncle

of yours seems to have a strange rambling propensity."

"He does," replied Melville; "it could, however, be accounted for; and I believe, by way of amusing some one of your solitary hours here, I will yet explain the cause; it may be as well to do so, and thus bespeak your sympathy in time."

"Oh! well," said Donaghue, laughing, "it will be always at your service; and this will be quite the place for calling it into action, where we can so quietly tune our distresses, and record our woes."

Melville wishing to devote a few days entirely to his friend, desired his arrival at Altoir-na-Grenie might not immediately be made known, and, in consequence, the doctor made up his mind to abstaining, for a little while, from going to the Vale. In consequence of the wish, therefore, that Melville had expressed, the party were a good deal disconcerted the next morning, by the sight of Foley crossing the court-yard, who was well known by them all, Melville as well as the others, owing to

his having been once an attendant on his uncle, to be an incessant tattler, and one who made it his business to run about from house to house, with all the news he could respectively collect at them.

"The coxcomb!" exclaimed Donaghue, extremely provoked, and who indeed had a particular cause of dislike to him, from conceiving, from the impertinent questions he asked, and the curiosity he evinced, on every occasion, about his affairs, that he was a kind of spy of sir William Erin, "only he has had a glimpse of us, through the windows being open, I certainly should have given orders to be denied to him; we shall now not only be tormented with his impertinence for an hour or two, but, through his means, be immediately broken in upon, as, the instant he leaves this, he will run about every where, proclaiming your arrival, Melville."

"Ah ha!" said Foley, entering at the moment, and who, ere his doing so, had learned who were in the parlour, "this is

what I call being fortunate indeed, to pounce upon a whole covey—to catch a leash, as I may say, in this manner. Mr. O'Brien, it is quite a rare thing to have the present pleasure. — Mr. Melville, I congratulate you, and myself, on your arrival here; and, doctor, I hope I see you so well, as to need neither an exertion of your own skill or mine. Oh dear! I really am quite rejoiced, and yet, as my friend Herodotus has it, I am happy and I am grieved; and were I asked why, I should give the same answer that king Xerxes did to Artabanes, on his observing that he wept, just as he had pronounced himself happy at seeing the Hellespont obscured with ships, and all the shores and the plains of the Abydenians crowded with men—' It has just occurred to me, reflecting how short the entire of human life is, that not one will arrive at his hundredth year."

"And yet, doctor," said Melville, "Artabanes' answer shewed that, for the enjoyments we have in this life, it is quite suf-

ficiently long—'For,' says he, 'no man has been made so happy by nature, to whom it did not often, and not once *only* occur, to wish rather to die than live; for the misfortunes befalling, and the diseases disturbing them, short as it is, make life appear to be long and tedious."

"Ah! very correct indeed," said Foley —"very correct; and I am happy to think of the reflecting turn of mind you possess, to let such observations make such an impression on you; for a reflective turn of mind indicates a philosophical one, and a philosophical one is absolutely requisite, when we are about hearing any thing unpleasant."

"Unpleasant!" repeated Melville, with something of emotion—"why I hope that is not the case with me, doctor!"

"My dear sir, I am sorry to say the reverse; but your worthy uncle——"

"My uncle! why what of him, pray?"

"Is not long for this world."

"Not long for this world!"

"No; if he was, he never would have

been ordered about as he has been; when I heard of the voyage to Lisbon, I guessed how it was; and since he has lingered long enough to return from it, rely on it he will soon be ordered on another; for, I am sorry to say it, there are a set of men amongst us, that for the sake of their reputation, as they call it—that is, in order not to let a man die under their hands, as they say, will have the inhumanity to put an unfortunate patient to the torture of going to a considerable distance to breathe his last sigh. Now this is a custom I always abhorred; when once I get hold of a patient, I never, by any chance, loosen or release him from it, till I either see him completely on his legs again, or beyond the power of ever using them more."

Rosebud coughed slightly—"That is, I suppose you mean, doctor," he said, "patients of a certain description."

"Why, to be sure, my good friend, I won't deny that the lives of some men must be more highly estimated than those of others; or, in other words, that it is a

peculiar duty to exert all our skill for the preservation of a man, whose fortune gives him the power of being a benefactor to society."

Rosebud gave another hem—"And only on that account! How nobly and abstractedly disinterested we sometimes are!" he said.

"But, my dear sir," resumed Melville, "there is some mistake here; my uncle's voyage to Lisbon was rather more for pleasure than health."

"Ay, so, I make no doubt, he was persuaded to think; but I, who had the honour of attending him for some time, and during that time made it my business to study his constitution, I knew the reverse: but don't let me affect you too much, Mr. Melville, by what I have said; reflect how many like you are doomed to lose their dearest friends—that, in short, there are none of us exempt from cares and troubles; even kings, as my friend Lucian has it, if you would more accurately contemplate them, you would find they were not, in any degree, happier than others, what

through the insincerity and ambiguity of fortune, to say nothing of the disturbance, hatred, snares, and flattery, attached to their situation; besides, there is no occasion, as yet, for utter despair. Could your uncle be prevailed on to seek a man who really understood his constitution, and who would esteem it an equal duty and a pleasure to devote himself to him, I think there might be a chance."

"But where, my dear doctor," interrupted Melville, with affected eagerness, who now began to see into his drift, and was not a little amused by him, "where is such a man to be found? or who is he?"

Foley made no reply, but he rested his chin on his gold-headed cane, slowly traced on the hearthstone, near which he was sitting, and which happened, at the moment, to be covered with dust blown in at the windows, "Doctor James Foley is the man."

"Well done, Foley!" cried Rosebud, slapping him on the back, as he read these words over his shoulder; "who, after this,

will pretend to say you are not a modest man?—Mr. Melville, after the high recommendation this gentleman has received from himself, I hope you will not fail mentioning him to your uncle."

"Oh! as to that, my good friend," said Foley, conceitedly, "I need not depend upon that recommendation, if I did not choose it; but I—perceive, clearly perceive, from what has now occurred, that envy, more or less, is always excited by rising talents—that——"

"Envy!" exclaimed Rosebud, fired by the insinuation; "why, you insignificant ——"

Here Donaghue, well acquainted with the temper of his friend, hastily interposed, by asking Foley when he had been at the Vale?

"At the Vale, my good sir! there is hardly a day in which I do not do myself the happiness of looking in there; not, I am proud to say, in my medical capacity, but merely as a friend; and I never call there that I am not interrogated concern-

ing you, so great is the regret and surprise which your never yet having been prevailed on to make your appearance there has excited, as well as, indeed, your general seclusion; and, I must confess, I am amongst those who feel astonishment at it—astonishment, that a young gentleman, so every way calculated to adorn society, should so pertinaciously persist in keeping himself apart from it: it is one of those things——"

Here Donaghue, in extreme disgust, gravely rose from his chair, and taking up a book, left the room.

"He cannot bear any allusion, I see, yet to his particular sorrows," said Foley, as if utterly unconscious of the rebuke this was meant to convey.

"Cannot bear any impertinence, you should say," cried Rosebud, vehemently, "Upon my word, Mr. Foley, you would do well if you were to content yourself with trying to dive into people's disorders, without trying, at the same time, to dive into their private concerns; but, to be

sure, you might want practice, or, at least, patients, perhaps, if you did, for a budget of news every morning is a great recommendation to old dowagers and antiquated maids."

"He! he!" tittered Foley, "you speak from experience, doctor," he said, pertly.

Rosebud again cast a look of fierceness on him, then suddenly checking himself—"As you are fond of quotations, I will give you one," he said—'The lips of talkers will be telling such things as apertain not unto them, but the words of such as have understanding are weighed in the balance;' and now that we are on the subject of quotations, I wonder you are not ashamed to be dragging in every moment, by the head and shoulders, no matter how inapplicable, those scraps of learning you have got, like a parrot, by rote."

"Ha! ha! that is very well of you! but not exactly so either; for though my very great and extensive practice has prevented my devoting all the time I could wish to the study of literature, I have yet

been able to give up some hours to the lamp, and have ever considered the sublime, when properly introduced, after the manner of a thunderbolt, that shelters all things."

"If you were to attend more to the meaning of your friends, as you call them, than to their words, you might derive some advantage from their sayings, but as it is, you just derive as much benefit from them as a parrot."

"Ah! very well! but you have read ——"

"Yes, I believe I have," interrupted Rosebud; "but if I had not to more account than you seem to have done, I should have had prudence and discretion enough to have held my tongue."

"Or if you couldn't, you might have had recourse to the same method of avoiding betraying yourself that the geese in Cilicia had. The geese in Cilicia, dreading the eagles, when they cross Mount Taurus, take a large stone in their mouths, that, by put-

ting a temporary stop to their garrulity and babbling, they may pass over in silence."

Rosebud's indignation now exceeding all bounds, he again started up.

"Come, come, gentlemen," said Melville, interfering, "I can't permit professional men——"

"What, Rosy," cried Foley, taking special care to get behind Melville, "are you driven to the *argumentum baculinum?* You must be devilish hard run indeed, when that's the case!"

"Such a pert gabbling blockhead merits chastisement!"

"My friend Xenophon says—'When beasts were able to speak, a sheep said to her master—"Ya, ya, ya!"

But here Foley, who had been retreating all the time, effected his escape, favoured by Melville, who, placing his back against the door, continued to guard the pass, until he saw him fairly out of sight.

The doctor, having given up going to the Vale for a day or two, thought this would be a good opportunity for paying

a visit to his friend Mr. Medlicott; accordingly, the morning after Melville's arrival, he set off for this gentleman's house, distant about nine or ten miles from Altoir-na-Grenie, leaving the friends completely to themselves, and relieved from any immediate apprehension of intrusion, through Foley's having met an express, just as he was quitting the court-yard, requiring his instant attendance on a lady, residing at a considerable distance.

The doctor was hardly gone, ere an invitation was received from a Mr. Felim O'Connor, a rich miller in the neighbourhood, requesting the company of Donaghue and any friends he might have with him, to a christening at his house the following evening.

Wishing to oblige, which he knew his acceptance of the invitation would do, Donaghue was on the point of sending such an answer as was wished for, when he learned that Miss Erin, who was to be one of the godmothers, was to be there, with a large party from the Vale, an inti-

mation that instantly decided him against going.

Melville, who had anticipated a good deal of amusement from such a scene, was a little vexed. Donaghue, however, could not be prevailed on to change his resolution; but at the same time he tried to persuade Melville himself to go, and this from a twofold motive—his seeing that he had an inclination to be present, and his wishing for the opportunity his absence would afford him to pay another visit to the ruin, where, if he did not this evening hear the music, he should, of course, conclude, or rather be confirmed in his conjecture, of its being Miss Erin he had heard. His anxiety to be out of doubt or suspense about this was so great, as to render him really urgent with Melville to honour Mr. O'Connor with his company.

Melville, however, appeared undecided for some time. At length, he thought he would go, provided he could do so without letting himself be known, conceiving he should have infinitely more amusement

at such a place, by appearing in a feigned character, than in his own. This was not the first time he had enjoyed a masquerade frolic, and he was now so bent on one, that he set about consulting the corporal on the subject.

The corporal, having hearkened to him attentively, suddenly left the room, without any reply; but almost as suddenly returned to it, with pleasure in his looks, and a bundle under his arm, which depositing on the table—"Ah then, plase your honour, sure then I think," he cried, "I can rig you out in great style, so as to make you appear as nice a young farmer as any of them that will be at Felim O'Connor's this evening; and you needn't have any objection to putting these things on," opening the bundle as he spoke, "for the devil a back they were ever on, since they came out of the tailor's hands, but are a bran new shute of clothes, which my late master, the Lord be good to his soul! made me a present of, just a little before his death, and which, through one thing

and another, the troubles that came on us after, and our going to the wars, have ever since, as a body may say, been lying up in lavender; and little did he who gave them think, when he was giving them, what would prevent their been worn, or that his only son would have been driven to fight and spill so much of his precious blood; but there's no use in talking of past grievances — they wouldn't signify now, if we could but get his honour to have a little of your fun in him, Mr. Melville; but the sorrow bit of that now, though I remember the time when he had enough of it. But by saint Patrick, Mr. Melville, but you'll be making me proud of my clothes!" for Melville, while he was talking, had been employing himself in trying them on; "for you quite cut a dash in them; and it's myself that fears you'll be doing mischief in them! for Miss Biddy O'Shaughnessey, to whom I am to introduce you, you know, as a young farmer come down to the neighbourhood about

cattle, is a great belle hereabouts, and admirer of beauty."

"Upon my word you are quite complimentary, corporal," said Melville; "however, I will hope that Miss Biddy's tranquillity will not suffer any injury through my wonderful attractions."

The frolic was carried into effect, without Donaghue, at present, knowing any thing about it, through his quitting the castle at an early hour for the abbey; and shortly afterwards Melville, equipped as a young farmer, with his eyebrows a little darkened, to give a shade of disguise to his features, in case the party from the Vale cast their eyes upon him, set out for the habitation of Mrs. O'Shaughnessey, accompanied by the corporal, and where they found the lady of the mansion, and her fair daughter, most impatiently waiting his arrival.

The corporal having introduced him, as agreed upon, the party forthwith set off for Mr. O'Connor's, Melville in the middle, and Mrs. O'Shaughnessey, a stout

large-made woman, decked out in all her Sunday finery, leaning on one arm, and the daughter, a strapping wench of nineteen, fat, red, and blowzy, attired in as many overalls as Betsy Blossom, and with as many streamers as a ship of war dressed in the colours of all nations, on the other.

The day had been uncommonly sultry, and still there was an overcoming closeness in the air, and the ladies in consequence soon becoming fatigued, began leaning all their weight upon Melville, in such a manner as plainly indicated their considering his offered support as by no means a mere complimentary thing; what he felt therefore, long before their coming to Mr. O'Connor's, may well be imagined. He bore it however without any indication of impatience, considering, since he had entered upon a frolic, he should good-humouredly endure whatever it subjected him to.

Primrose Farm, the scene of the entertainment, was a long, low, thatched building, constructed something in the form of a

St. Patrick's cross, with doors opening from the points, or passages that met in the centre of it. This mode of building rendered the rooms extremely cool and pleasant in warm weather, but very much the reverse in winter, as, let the wind blow from what quarter it listed, it was sure, from having an inlet at every point, to gain admission here. Adjoining it were the ruins of a Franciscan abbey, once of considerable extent and magnificence, as the remains indicated, particularly one of the windows, two of the aisles, and some of the octagon pillars, that still retained the outlines of ancient grandeur and elegance. On the other side of the house was an old round tower of rude workmanship, and on the north an exceeding large cross, with a curious Oghem inscription on it. The chapel belonging to the abbey was turned into a ball-alley, so that where priests preached, and people prayed, idle fellows now loitered and wrangled, rendering the habitation of Mr. Felim O'Connor disagreeable in some respects, while,

in others, the vestiges of antiquity surrounding it rendered it interesting.

A dwelling to which the builder had given so peculiar a form could not be seen without curiosity; why it was built in so strange a manner occasioned a good deal of inquiry, and not less conjecture; some were of one opinion, some another; but it was the general one, considering the holy spot on which it was erected, that there must have been some very sufficient reason for giving it the shape it had; and the prevailing one, or rather, report about it was, that it had been built at the cost of a Mr. Michael Delany, an old gentleman who had made a fortune abroad, no one knew how, and who, through some circumstances connected with this fortune, being apprehensive of a visit from a being that shall be nameless, had decided on giving a form to his habitation that might operate as a spell in keeping him out, or if not, at least in procuring his own escape; hence its numerous doors to the adjoining chapel, where he might defy him. Be

that as it may, his successor, Mr. Felim O'Connor had, often reason to regret the whim, from the disturbance it was the occasion of to him, as, to say nothing of the dismal howlings of the wind through the building, it was hardly possible for any one to pass through the passages in winter without their light being extinguished—a circumstance that was always sure of creating an alarm, when it happened to any of the female part of the family, insomuch as often to excite a belief that captain Rock, with some of his men, had gained admission, when it was only a harmless ghost or two, whisking back to the churchyard. As far, however, as good furniture and good cheer could render it comfortable, it was rendered so—Mr. Felim O'Connor being rich and hospitable, and his wife well inclined to make a display of his money.

Ere the arrival of Melville and his companions, all the guests, with the exception of the party from the Vale, who were not ex-

pected till a late hour, were assembled; tea and coffee were handing about, with a profusion of cakes of all descriptions, and all seemed to be enjoying themselves, and perfectly inclined to do justice to the entertainment provided for them. Mrs. O'Shaughnessey and her daughter had not been seated, when—"Ah, then, Tim Carthy!" cried Mrs. O'Connor, addressing herself to a great gaunt-looking fellow, who was officiating as attendant, "is this the way, and be hanged to you, you are minding what you are about, not to have been after handing the tay yet to Mrs. O'Shaughnessey and Miss Bridget, or their friend? —Ah, then, Mrs. O'Shaughnessey, honey! what's the name of the gentleman you have brought along *wid* you?"

Mrs. O'Shaughnessey and her daughter stared at one another at this question, utterly unable to reply to it, the corporal having merely introduced Melville by the appellation of a young farmer.—"Why then, upon my faith," said the former,

"that's more than I can tell you—can you, Biddy?"

"No," replied Miss Bridget, "but I soon will;" and tapping Melville on the shoulder, whom she had contrived to make occupy a chair beside her, but whose attention happened at the instant to be diverted from her, "pray what's your name, sir?" she asked.

"My name, ma'am!" repeated Melville, embarrassed by the suddenness of the question—"my name!"

"Yes, sir; but not the name your godfathers and godmother gave you, but your father."

"I—I believe—Dennis Scanlen, ma'am," he said, suddenly recovering himself, and fixing on the first name that came into his head.

"Dennis Scanlen!" cried Mrs. O'Connor, almost with a scream—"why, then, have I the pleasure of seeing one of the Scanlens under my roof? I mean, if you are of the Ballinafod family, whose great

grandfather, they have it recorded amongst them, had the honour of being made trumpeter to one of king William's *ginirals*."

"The same, ma'am."

"Ah, then, why didn't I know this sooner, that I might have given you a proper welcome at once? for don't you know that we are relations?"

Melville bowed.

"Nothing less than fifth cousins. Your grandmother, and my great grandfather ——But, Mr. O'Connor, dear," calling to her husband, who was making himself agreeable at the other end of the room to some ladies, "is this the way you are welcoming my relation to your house?"

"Where?" demanded the obedient husband, turning round with quickness.

"There he is, Dennis Scanlen; and I'll be bound, when you look at him, you'll be saying you'd have known him any where for one of them."

"Why then you may say that, 'tis his father's son I'd have known him to be any day, by his black eyebrows.—Well,

sir, now that we have got you amongst us, you'll be letting us keep you a bit?"

"Ah, then, to be sure he will," said his wife; "I'd take it very unkind—I'd take it indeed very unkind, if the child of his father wouldn't be stopping a bit with us."

"You are very good," said Melville, "extremely kind; but, at present, I am——"

He was prevented proceeding in his excuse, by half a score old women, it seemed to him, starting forward to claim relationship or acquaintance with him, through his supposed parents, and whose extravagant demonstrations of joy at seeing him, or rather the way they took to evince their pleasure at the circumstance, had very near been too much for his good-humour and complaisance, more especially from the amusement he saw it occasioned in a quarter of the room where he did not like at all the idea of being laughed at. But more of this anon. He at length extricated himself from the old ladies, and order being in some degree restored—"Tim Carthy," cried Mrs. O'Connor,

again addressing herself to the attendant, "I have been watching you all this time, and the devil a thing you have been doing but standing staring at my cousin Denny there, as if you had never seen a gentleman before!"

"Faith! and Mrs. O'Connor," replied Tim, "it's no wonder if I do stare!" with his eyes still fixed upon Melville.

"Ah, then, is this your manners, Tim, to be talking to your mistress before the company? Be handing the tay about to the company—let them sugar themselves, and I'll milk them all round."

"One eyebrow almost gone!" muttered Tim, as if unconsciously, on again handing the tea-tray to Melville; and Melville immediately became sensible of what had occasioned his astonishment, and the rebuke of his mistress—namely, the brushing away of the black off of one of his eyebrows, through the caps of the old ladies, as they were saluting him, coming in contact with it. Before he came he might have laughed at the idea of such a mischance,

but now he did not like it, from the ridicule it might expose him to; so, by the aid of a looking-glass pretty near him, he slyly contrived to render both nearly alike again.

"Ah then, Dennis, jewel," asked Mrs. O'Connor, as she continued to pour out the tea, "is there any chance of that match, that has been so long talked of, ever taking place between O'Dempsey and your cousin?"

"I really can't say, ma'am."

"But you know whether it's off or not?"

"No, really."

"Well to be sure, that's odd! but some people are very close. But any how, tell me, have you met, by any chance, with old Nell Rooney, since you came to the neighbourhood?"

"Not to my knowledge, ma'am."

"Oh, then it's herself, poor soul! that'll be taking on, if she doesn't see you before you quit it; for she's a kind of a relation, and was a great crony of your fa-

ther and mother's, when they lived here, a good many years ago; more especially as the poor soul will be thinking your not seeking her out was owing to her being gone down in the world. Poor Nelly has been very unfortunate; but indeed I think, Mrs. O'Shaughnessey, things seemed to take a turn with her ever since the trouble she caused to squire Riley's family about her pig, and no wonder—it was a bad thing to affront, or make inimies of people of their quality."

"Why, yes, to be sure," assented Mrs. O'Shaughnessey; "but then if people are wronged——"

"Wronged!" exclaimed Mrs. O'Connor, with a stare of astonishment. "Why sure you don't imagine——"

"Oh, no matter," said the other. "I say nothing; for 'the least said the soonest mended."

"Well," cried Miss Bridget, throwing herself back in her chair, and kicking up her feet, in rather a hoydening manner, "this is the way my mother always goes

on, letting people think she knows more than she likes to tell!"

"Why then I am sure you are very polite for saying so, Miss Biddy!—But as you were observing, ma'am," to Mrs. O'Connor, drawing her chair closer to her as she spoke, but in doing which she unfortunately set it upon Miss Biddy's foot, to her, no doubt, inexpressible pain, as the roar she gave intimated.

"Good Heavens, girl! what is the matter?" demanded the alarmed mother.

"The matter!" repeated the daughter, as she kicked off her shoe, and began rubbing her foot, "I think the devil's the matter with you sometimes, that you can't speak without fidgetting about so! and I wish he had had Mrs. Rooney, her pig, squire Riley, who had him stolen, and the whole set of them, before I had my great toe hurt as it is!"

"Biddy! Biddy! I blush for you, to speak in such a way, before such ginteel company, and act so improper as you do, by shewing your bare foot!"

" It's not bare," said Miss Biddy; " for isn't the stocking on it still?"

But at this instant the sound of coach wheels, rolling towards the house, caused a general bustle; an immediate arrangement took place—the chairs were disposed in better order, and Mr. and Mrs. O'Connor went out to receive their distinguished guests from the Vale; but a terrible disappointment awaited them—a sudden indisposition prevented Miss Erin from coming, so that the party merely consisted of lady Jane Morley, who, out of compliment to her family, had been asked to be one of the godmothers, Miss Bond, deputed to stand in place of Miss Erin, Mr. Lawless, a dangler on lady Jane, for she could not exist without having some beaus at her absolute command, and sir Edward Surrey, one of the godfathers.

Leaning on the arm of Mr. Lawless, lady Jane entered the room, and taking possession of the seat at the upper end of it, to which she was obsequiously ushered by her host and hostess, looked round her

with a vacant stare, as if not perfectly comprehending that she saw any one in it. So far Miss Bond followed her example, in leaning also on her beau; but as to seeming not to perceive there was any one else in the apartment, that was out of the question—so great was her anxiety to ascertain what notice or admiration she, or at least her dress, excited, having on this evening attired herself in all the extravagance of the Parisian mode, as it prevailed on her quitting Paris; so that from the quantity of furbelows and flowers, to say nothing of other ornaments with which she was decorated, she very much resembled a dancing puppet, and, in consequence, was very near meeting with a serious mischance; for Tim, who, throughout the evening, was evidently more intent on making remarks on the company than minding what he was himself about, was so struck by her appearance, resembling nothing that he had ever seen before, that, on approaching her with the tea-tray—for though it had been sig-

nified that the party from the Vale were not to be expected to tea, Mrs. O'Connor would insist on its being offered to them, ere any thing else took place, after their arrival—he became so entirely engrossed by looking at her, as not to perceive he was holding it unevenly, till it became completely overturned, in such a direction as must have thrown all its contents into her lap, but for her own adroitness in pushing it aside at the instant, in such a way as transferred them to her next neighbour, sir Edward's; for, perceiving the carelessness of the attendant, she was prepared to be on her guard against any ill consequences that might result from it.

Not a little was the confusion which the accident occasioned; but as it was quickly ascertained that the tea had not been sufficiently hot to scald sir Edward, notwithstanding his exclamation to that effect in the first instance, and as every thing that could be done was done to prevent his suffering any serious inconvenience from it, order was quickly re-

stored; but not without the baronet's observing to Miss Bond, that, upon his honour, she had done the thing neatly, for he had never seen a more complete slight of hand trick played than hers.

The ceremony of the christening at length commenced; but here again was a little confusion, for, on the infant, as usual, being offered to one or other of the godmothers to hold, both refused taking it. At length it was absolutely forced upon Miss Bond, who, extremely indignant at a greater liberty being taken with her than with her ladyship, was determined not to put up with it quietly; accordingly, by degrees sidling towards her ladyship, she made a sudden attempt to put it into her arms, but which the other preventing, by starting back, the unfortunate infant would have fallen to the ground, had not sir Edward Surrey started forward just in time to save it.

"Good Heavens!" exclaimed lady Jane, darting a glance of contempt at Miss

Bond; "the awkward thing! does she mean to be the death of the child?"

"The awkward thing!" repeated Miss Bond, in a tone of high exasperation. "Well, really," with a toss of her head, "this is what I never met with before! When I was at Paris, I was considered——"

"Pray let the ceremony proceed," said lady Jane.—"And do, sir Edward, I beseech you," to the unfortunate baronet, who looked round in vain for some one to relieve him from his squalling burden, "try if you can't, by dandling it a little, stop the roaring of that miserable little thing!"

"Oh, don't mind it, my lady," cried Mrs. O'Connor—"'tis a lucky sign for an infant to roar when it's christening."

At length the ceremony was over, and lady Jane instantly prepared to depart; in vain she was implored and entreated to stay and partake of a collation, which, at no small expence and trouble, had been prepared for her, and the party to which

she belonged; go she would, to the no small pleasure of Melville, who felt that her remaining would impose a very irksome restraint upon him, as he could not, from a fear of recognition, have then acted as he wished. The risk of this he had been careless about ere his reaching Mr. O'Connor's, but hardly had he got there, ere he felt he should like to remain unknown for the remainder of the evening, from the greater liberty it would allow him to devote himself to one object. In short, he had scarcely entered the room, ere his eyes were attracted, and his fancy captivated, by one of the prettiest creatures he thought he had ever seen. She appeared to be about nineteen, and had for a companion a girl who seemed to be about her own age, and was also excessively pretty; but there was this difference between them—Melville's charmer looked all life and animation, the other pale and languid, as if some cankerworm had fed upon her damask cheek, and stolen away its bloom and dimples. There

was an air about them indicative of their not exactly belonging to the society in which they were met; and Melville found the conjecture it gave rise to was not erroneous, on eagerly inquiring who they were, being informed that one was the daughter, and the one he so particularly admired, Miss Audley, the relation, it was supposed, of a Mr. and Mrs. Wheatley, people of small but independent fortune, and retired habits, who had lately taken a pretty cottage, called Rosehill, in the neighbourhood.

One of the barns had been fitted up for dancing, and as soon as the party from the Vale had departed, the guests began to repair to this. Melville no sooner understood that dancing was about commencing, than he flew, regardless of the looks and evident expectation of Miss O'Shaughnessey, to solicit the honour of Miss Audley's hand for the dance.

It was granted, but with an air that plainly indicated a consciousness of its being a condescension its being so. Yet

certainly it was impossible for the young lady to deny his being more deserving of it than any other person then present. Her friend declined following her example, though earnestly importuned to do so; but though she would not dance, she attended her to the rustic ball-room, where, if there was not as much elegance as might have been pleasing to some of the party, there was at least as much mirth and enjoyment.

Melville could not help continuing to be amused by the air of condescension with which his pretty partner continued to regard him. Yet that she did think him worthy of some regard was evident, from his still finding, whenever his eyes were for a moment diverted from her, on reverting to her, hers intently fastened on him. Sometimes she appeared a little confused at this; sometimes only laughed, as if it really were of no kind of consequence what a person like him thought on the subject, whom, of course, if requisite, she could check by a glance; and her

friend, keeping close to her elbow, though her wandering eye confessed her conversation intended for him, she still addressed it to her, as if it could not possibly be expected she could have entered into one with him. Well, Melville only admired her the more for these pretty little airs of supposed superiority, more especially as he thought he saw a little kind of struggle in her feelings about him.

For the sake of amusement, he endeavoured to support the character he had assumed; but he was so every moment slipping into his usual style of speaking, that there is hardly a doubt but that, in some measure, he must have betrayed himself ere long, had not his fair partner been hurried away. Before the first dance was well over, the servant from Rosehill was announced, with a message that there must be no delay in the return of the young ladies; and indeed, Mrs. O'Connor whispered Melville, it had been a great indulgence their being allowed to come at all.

The moment they were gone there was

an end of any farther interest or amusement in the scene to Melville, and nothing but politeness detained him after them; but as he considered Mrs. O'Shaughnessey and her daughter under his care, he could not bring himself to depart without them. As if to try his patience, they staid till almost the very last moment, and he was absolutely dragging them along, when, to his great joy, they encountered the corporal, who, suspecting what would be the case, had come out to prevent his having the trouble of seeing them home, and to whom he immediately made them over, to the extreme indignation of Miss Bridget, who protested, after their civility to him, the least thing, she thought, he could have done, would have been to have seen them all the way himself, even though he had been a gentleman, instead of one of the Scanlens, who, God knows, every one knew to be no great things.

While Melville was thus amusing himself at the christening, Donaghue was wandering in a melancholy manner about. By

the time he reached the abbey, the shadows of evening were beginning to fall around it, and the air to hold that solemn stillness that was so calculated to add to the effect produced by the impressive loneliness of the place. Eagerly penetrating to the interior of the building, he searched and examined as before, but without being able to discover the trace of any human being. Yet so it was on the evening he had heard the singing, and this reflection involuntarily detained him in the chapel, on descending to it. He was lingering in it, almost against his conviction of hearing any one that night, when, as he was watching the cold grey hue of twilight, gradually stealing over the glow of the western sky, he suddenly fancied he distinguished the sound of a harp, and at the very same moment that of approaching steps behind him. He eagerly turned to see who it was that was entering, or whether his ear had deceived him, and, to his unutterable astonishment, so entirely had he given way to the belief

of its being her he heard on the harp, beheld Miss Erin, with one of her young cousins, the daughter of her uncle Erin. His surprise at seeing her entering, at the very instant he had imagined her above in the cloisters, from having again distinguished the harp, was so great, as for a moment to deprive him of the power of doing more than staring at her with a bewildered look, as if incredulous of its being her he really saw. At length, trying to collect himself, he was on the point of addressing her, but with his eyes wandering towards the cloisters—for since it was not her he heard, who then could the being be who so mysteriously haunted the pile, rendering herself visible and invisible, just as she pleased, it seemed? when the rush of female garments was heard, and the next instant a female figure, in white, was seen gliding through the gallery.

Miss Erin started, and drew back; and —"Good gracious!" cried her cousin, clinging to her, "who can that be? Dear

me, Mr. O'Brien, how frightened we should now be only you are here!"

Donaghue made no reply; he had not the power at the moment, so intense was his anxiety and expectation.

Descending footsteps were heard—the little arched door that shut in the narrow winding stairs, conducting to the upper cloisters, was pushed open, and a tall figure stepped forward into the chapel. She suddenly stopped, threw back the long flowing veil, that gave a shadowy appearance to her form, and lady Jane Morley stood confessed to view.

"Lady Jane Morley! is it possible?" was the general exclamation.

"Is it possible!" she repeated; and then, with a laugh to Donaghue—"Well, really, O'Brien, this is——" "Good acting," it was evident she would have said, had she finished the sentence.—"And you to appear so surprised too," she said, again turning to Miss Erin, "as if you really thought no one had a love for solitude but yourself!"

"I never had the affectation to pretend

a love for it," said Miss Erin, with a severity of tone not by any means usual with her.

"No!" cried lady Jane, with the utmost unconcern—"I thought the very reverse then indeed, from your passion for shady groves and purling streams."

"I can't see how a love for rural scenery, or even the occasional enjoyment of its quietude, can be construed into a passion for solitude," replied Miss Erin. "However, whether it could or no, is of very little consequence; nor is this a place or hour for the argument of the point.—It gets late, Millicent," addressing herself to her cousin, "and we must not, therefore, delay any longer here."

"But you will not think of returning by yourselves?" said Donaghue, eagerly, now only beginning to recover from the agitating effect of the incident upon him; for, from all that had occurred, it was plain to him Miss Erin conceived there had been an appointment between him and lady Jane, and he could not instantly

suppress the feeling of anger and vexation which the conviction gave him.

" Why not?" demanded Miss Erin, with quickness. " If we had been apprehensive of any danger from doing so, we should not have depended on chance for an escort."

Donaghue bowed, as if answered; but on seeing her turn away, he involuntarily darted after her, and catching her hand— " At least allow me," he said, " to assist you through these passages; you know not how dangerous they are at such an hour as this."

" You are mistaken," she replied, wresting her hand from him; " but whether I was or not, there is another lady that requires your services quite as much as I could possibly do."

" Thank you, my dear," said lady Jane, catching him by the arm as she spoke, " for turning the gentleman over to me; for really I am a terrible hand in making my way through these horrible places."

" Then only to think of your coming

to them, lady Jane!" said Millicent; "and then to go up by yourself, and glide about through those frightful dark galleries, making believe you were a castle spectre!"

"Very terrific indeed, and very amusing! now was it not so, Millicent? did not I please you very much?"

"Why a little, I believe," replied Millicent; "any thing wonderful is so pleasant!"

Had Donaghue been a lover that dared aspire, how gratified—how more than gratified—how delighted would he have been—how enraptured at the inference it was fair to draw, from the suddenly altered manner of Miss Erin towards him! for why, if careless about his sentiments—if indifferent whether the ardent passion he had once avowed for her were transferred to another or not—why that appearance of discomposure—that indication of resentment and anger, at the supposition of a meeting between him and lady Jane? but as it was, what pleasure could he derive

from it, since, to give way to a farther hope concerning him, was out of the question? But was not his vanity misleading him? could it be, that she who had so peremptorily rejected him—who had cast him from her, as it were, as a being unworthy of her regard, entertained a favourable sentiment for him, or rather such a degree of interest about him, as could occasion her to care who he thought of, or what he did? Yet no; he was too well acquainted with all the symptoms of the passion he now more than suspected her gentle bosom of harbouring, to allow himself to think he was mistaken in the construction he put on her recent conduct—a construction, that, argue as he might with himself on the subject, it was not in the nature of a youthful lover not to experience, at least transient rapture from. When she had rejected him, then it was from a sense of offended pride and delicacy, and the offence he had given her forgiven, atoned for by repentance; had circumstances allowed the renewal of

his addresses, he might, even now, at this very moment, have been blessed in her possession. Oh, the bitter pang of that thought!—a thought, that had it been possible for a heart like his, the seat of filial piety, and love, and reverence, to have uttered a reproach against the memory of a parent, must have urged him to do so at the instant; and to a suspicion perhaps of this, her not altogether regarding him with unfavourable sentiments, was owing the conduct that had so hurt him in her father; the idea struck cold upon his heart, as if it were only now he had become sensible of any obstacles to his hopes of her. But since such obstacles did exist—since fortune had placed insurmountable barriers between them, was it generous to rejoice at what had just occurred? could it afford him pleasure to think she suffered such anguish as he was suffering—that the sympathy of wretchedness existed between them? no; and he would therefore more sedulously than

ever shun her, command every look, and silence every sigh, in her presence; and even—even permit her to continue in the mistake under which she at present laboured.

Of his wishing, or meaning, to do this, however, the almost sullen silence he continued to preserve towards lady Jane was no proof. In vain, in an under tone, she half rallied, half reproached him; his whole soul was abstracted at the moment; and even if this had not been the case, a strong feeling of indignation at the conduct she had been guilty of—the artifice and deception that, in some way or other, she had recourse to, would have prevented her succeeding in having any effect upon him.

Miss Erin, however, walking before them, without ever casting a glance behind her, was not sensible of this; to her, indeed, it might have appeared, from only hearing the voice of lady Jane in whispers, as if they were carrying on a very agreeable conversation; but whatever she

thought, or whatever she felt, by the time she reached the house she had perfectly collected herself, and pausing on the steps, awaited there their coming up to her, to invite Donaghue in.

This was an invitation, however, it may readily be believed, in the present state of his mind, Donaghue had no hesitation in refusing. Perplexed, bewildered, agitated, to a degree that robbed him of all self-possession, by what had occurred, he was impatient to be alone, and accordingly making his bow, hastily retreated.

On repairing to the drawing-room, the party found only lady Erin and Miss Bond there, waiting tea for them.—" My dear child," said lady Erin, on seeing the languid manner in which Miss Erin threw herself on a seat, " how pale you look !"

" The—the excessive closeness of the air has, I believe, overcome me a little," replied Miss Erin, leaning back her head as she spoke against the arm of the sofa, whilst, in spite of all her efforts to prevent it, a tear strayed down her cheek.

"It has indeed, I fear," said her ladyship; "and languid as you appear, how will you ever be able to endure the noise and bustle of the scene to which you are going?"

"Oh dear! it will be of service to her," said lady Jane, in a tone of the greatest unconcern, delighted to perceive that the poison she had taken such pains to instill was beginning to operate.

"I cannot agree with you," replied lady Erin, "and I therefore very much wish Eveleen could decline going: this could be done," she anxiously added, "if she could get any one to go in her place."

"What a ridiculous fuss about her!" lady Jane could with difficulty prevent herself from saying, but checking herself—"oh, that would be a very easy matter, I should conceive," she said; "here is Millicent, or Miss Bond, at least, would answer, I should conceive."

"Oh yes! certainly, Miss Bond," cried lady Erin, eagerly catching at the suggestion, "if she had no objection."

"Oh dear! none in the world," replied Miss Bond—"that is, if I have time to change my dress."

"Why, sure, my dear," said lady Erin, "there is no occasion for your changing the dress you put on for dinner."

"Oh dear, yes!" cried the young lady; "when I was in Paris, I got the custom of changing my dress for every fresh party I went to, and so——"

"Well, my dear, do as you like," said lady Erin, "only remember that you are now going to a mere party of rustics."

Rustics had eyes, however, as well as other people, and as to be stared at was the very height of poor little Miss Bond's ambition, away she flew to dress herself in the manner that has been already described.

It was not long before lady Erin began to fear that it was something more than the mere languor of fatigue that oppressed her daughter; yet what could it be? she knew not how to hint the suspicion, and yet she felt it must continue till she

knew whether she was mistaken. But she was not long allowed to torment herself with conjectures. The impression made upon the imagination of Millicent, by the appearance of lady Jane in the abbey, induced her to mention it, and her relation of what had occurred there quickly accounted to her aunt for what had perplexed and alarmed her. The result of her reflections on the subject, was a determination to endeavour to bring matters to a speedy issue between her daughter and Donaghue, by trying to ascertain whether indeed there was any attachment between him and lady Jane, as appearances, which however she knew were often deceitful, now seemed to indicate. But for the purpose of enabling this to be done, she saw no other method than by inducing Donaghue to become a visitor at the Vale; she accordingly decided on remonstrating with sir William on the subject, and urging him to take more effectual measures for accomplishing this than he had yet done, by representing to

him, that surely, after all, the most likely and effectual methods for obtaining that knowledge of, or insight into the young man's disposition and sentiments, would be by procuring opportunities for familiar converse with him, instead of pursuing vague inquiries about him; and that he might, besides, have other motives than were surmised, for hitherto declining any overtures towards an acquaintance there, and this indeed lady Erin knew, or rather was persuaded, was the case, being almost convinced, like her daughter, that it was owing to the embarrassing recollection of what had occurred between them, that these overtures were disregarded. This, however, was a surmise she would not venture to disclose to sir William, lest, from the light in which she knew he regarded his daughter, and his certainly having a little tendency in his nature towards haughtiness, the presumption which Donaghue had, assuredly, been guilty of towards her, might be an offence not par-

donable in his eyes; and such were the fears of Miss Erin, else would she have revealed what she thought to her father, and thus probably have vindicated Donaghue from the suspicion of having any unworthy motive for not visiting publicly at the Vale.

But it now remains to explain lady Jane's motives for acting as she had done: of what avail, she considered, would it be to have Donaghue prevented from resorting to the Vale, if still a belief of a mutual attachment between him and Miss Erin were allowed to exist? for destroying this, at least on the lady's side, she saw no other method than that of inducing one of his being attached to another; and the idea had no sooner occurred, than she quickly decided on exerting herself to make it appear that she herself was the object of his secret visits to the Vale, or, in short, that a secret intercourse subsisted between them, for which, she made no doubt, she should be able to assign some sufficient reason. Much, however, as she

relied on her skill in plotting and planning, she saw she must, in the present instance, proceed with the greatest caution and address, if she hoped to succeed in what she had undertaken, from not having common minds to deal with, such as immediately gave way to appearances, and in a moment believed any thing that others chose to impose upon them: instead, therefore, of positively asserting any thing at first, she merely began to act in such a manner as was calculated to awaken suspicion, and gradually insinuate the belief she wished to inspire. She suddenly began to assume an appearance of restlessness and abstraction, and to be continually out by herself, without explaining where: but this was not all; she had several *billet-doux* of Donaghue's laying by her, the productions of other and very different days, and these she re-sealed, and contrived, from time to time, to have delivered to her before Miss Erin, as if just then sent, and who, she was aware, was perfectly acquainted with his handwriting. Still,

however, she was not satisfied: there might be billets, without love in them; and except she could make it appear that she and Donaghue had private meetings, she much feared, notwithstanding all the trouble she had been at, that she might ultimately fail in the accomplishment of what she wished. To effect this it was requisite to ascertain whether he had now any particular haunt; this she was soon enabled to do, through the spies she had set upon him; and no sooner did she discover that the abbey was the place he now frequented, than she decided on the scheme of exciting his curiosity, in such a manner as should prevent his forsaking it till the discovery of their both frequenting it had taken place, which, in one way or the other, she determined to have made. Through her emissaries she had a harp conveyed there, and a place of concealment discovered for it, that none but a person perfectly acquainted with the building could possibly have detected. She was in great hopes, from Miss Erin's ad-

miration of this old pile, and the pleasure she took in straying about, that she would have made the discovery she was anxious for of her own accord; but, latterly, Miss Erin had not indulged herself as much as she was wont to do in this propensity; she was afraid of meeting Donaghue, after what had passed at their last accidental encounter, and, if the truth must be told, she was also afraid of meeting him with lady Jane, therefore avoided, more than she had ever done before, rambling about the grounds; for the artifices of her ladyship had not altogether failed of the intended effect; suspicions were awakened by what she saw—by what she remarked, for the notes were not lost upon her, and a kind of dread of having those suspicions confirmed, induced her to keep a constant watch over her footsteps; for, let us talk as we may, of suspense—of incertitude, we involuntarily shrink from the confirmation of any painful apprehension.

Lady Jane finding this, had again recourse to artifice. On the evening of the

christening, her woman, encountering Miss Erin in one of the galleries, with much seeming anxiety inquired if she knew where her lady was?

No, Miss Erin replied, she did not; adding, she thought she had been in her dressing-room.

"Oh dear, no, ma'am!" replied the well-instructed abigail, who was an English *demoiselle*, and had been some time in the service of her ladyship; "and I want her so bad, having a message to give her; but I suppose, since she is no where to be found in the house, she has taken herself off to that old ruination place."

"What place?" demanded Miss Erin, suddenly stopping as she was passing her.

"Oh dear, mem! the *h*abby, they call it, in the *W*ale yonder. I'm sure 'tis to me the *h*oddest *w*agary in the world the one she has lately taken to be wisiting it, when there's such a number of nice, new, pretty buildings about the grounds here, where one would be in no danger of meeting ghostesses, or any rubbish of that

kind. I shouldn't, however, have known nothin*k* about it but for an *h*accident, so I hopes, mem, you'll tell her nothink of what I am telling you, for she makes quite a mystery of going there, as one may say. She comes to me last Monday, yes, it was last Monday—and—'Oh, Featherston!' says she, all in a flusteration, 'as sure as any thing, I have lost my diamond bracelet, and you must go look for it.'—'I go look for it, mem,' says I, laughing, 'is it without knowing where?'—'Pooh, no, you fool!' says she; 'do you think I want to send you of a wildgoose-chace? I'm certain sure I dropt it in the old habbey, and there you must go look for it.'—'Is it to that ruination place, mem?' says I, with a scream, 'to be scared out of my seven senses by seeing a ghost, or a hobgoblin? no, my lady, you must excuse me,' says I; 'these wild *Hi*rish are bad enough, God he knows, in their own shapes, without running the risk of meeting them in any that's not natural.'—'Tut, you fool!' says she, 'don't

you know that ghosts never walk by daylight? so go you must, for I wouldn't, for all the world, that any body but yourself knew of my frequenting the old *h*abbey; and if you find my bracelet, you shall have the fine crimson tabinet, that you told me you were so longing for the other day, when you went to the haberdasher's for me.'

"Well, mem, there was no resisting this," said Mrs. Featherston—"that is, mem, I mean her coaxing words—and so off I goes to the ruins, and there to be sure, sure enough, after *hex*ploring, as she calls it, I don't know how many dark passages, I finds the bracelet."

"Well, well," said Miss Erin, "since your lady has intimated that she does not like to have her visits there known, you must be silent on the subject;" quitting the gallery as she spoke, but almost lost in thought: she had lately once or twice heard, through the contrivance indeed of lady Jane, that Donaghue had been seen about the abbey, and from what was now men-

tioned, she drew a conclusion from the circumstance, that certainly made her fair bosom experience a momentary pang. Yet why—at liberty as they both were to act as they please—why give this appearance of mystery to any attachment between them, if one really did exist? but might not this be accounted for by the supposition of Donaghue's having an insuperable objection to visiting at the house? yet still there was a something, she knew not what, except it was the agitated manner of Donaghue, whenever they had lately met, that opposed her giving absolute credit to what she was induced to believe.

Endeavouring, at length, to compose herself, she proceeded to join her cousin Millicent, almost all the rest of the party at the Vale being dispersed this day, with whom she had been going to take a short stroll before tea, at the very moment of encountering Mrs. Featherston; for, as already mentioned, it was not her intention to go to Mr. O'Connor's, till the bus-

tle attendant on their receiving the guests there was over.

In which direction she now walked, so it was not in that of the abbey, she cared not: determined against this, it certainly therefore appeared rather extraordinary that still this should be the very direction that was taken, as she discovered to be the case, on suddenly raising her eyes from the ground, when within a few yards of the building, not before, we must conclude from the agitation indicative of surprise she evinced at the moment.—"Good Heavens!" she exclaimed, abruptly stopping, "how is it, Millicent, that we took this direction?"

"I am sure I don't know," said Millicent; "but are you frightened at being at the abbey? to be sure it is a dismal-looking place—but it is not late enough yet, I think, to make one sorry for having come to it; do let us just take a peep into the old chapel—I do so love these old places."

"No, no! by no means! not now, my

dear girl!" repeated her cousin, in a tone of resistance. Millicent, however, held her firmly by the arm, and so, in spite of herself, we must suppose, she was drawn onward, notwithstanding the tone in which she had spoken, till she found herself within the chapel, where what followed has been already described. Well, after this—after what occurred there, any longer to have doubted the reality of what had been previously insinuated, and she would have been led to consider herself one of those obstinate kind of beings, who will never allow themselves to be convinced of any thing they dislike to believe. The extreme confusion and emotion of the gentleman, originating, no doubt, in feelings of delicacy for the lady, were proof positive of his being there by appointment, and, of course, that in putting that construction on his manner to herself which she had done, she had led herself into an error. However this was known only to herself, and there was something soothing in that reflection: yet again, to counter-

balance this, there was bitterness in the thought that, but for her secret derision of lady Jane's repeated hints of what was now actually proved to be the case, what she now felt might have been spared her: and how could she have persisted in her incredulity, with regard to these hints, was now the question, considering the generally acknowledged attractions of lady Jane, or be so romantic as to suppose, that after her positive rejection of him, and the mortifying terms in which that rejection was couched, Donaghue could possibly persist in cherishing a passion for her; altogether she stood self-convicted of a degree of weakness, that induced a belief of her really having a greater degree of self-love in her composition than she had previously been aware of: but nothing so terribly hurt her feelings as the idea of her conduct to Donaghue in the abbey, the sense of injury it certainly seemed to imply—what must he infer from it, but that which she now shrunk from the idea of his imagining? and this was the command

she had over herself! ah, how premature is all praise, till we are put to the test! but she could not help thinking the feelings incidental to any sudden surprise or shock excusable; and that, of course, it was only their indulgence that was justly reprehensible—condemnation for this she determined not to incur. All things considered, she almost felt she ought rather to rejoice than regret at what had occurred, uncertain as she was of what her father's final sentiments might be with regard to an attachment between her and Donaghue; at least, it was by ingenious arguments of this description with herself on the subject, she tried to compose her spirits, and regain her wonted appearance of tranquillity.

Lady Jane saw with delight what she had achieved, from the belief with which she had so artfully been inspired; she had not the slightest doubt that, even unconsciously to herself, such an alteration would take place in Miss Erin's manner towards Donaghue, as could not fail of destroying

any hopes that might have continued lingering in his heart about her; and those destroyed, what was to hinder the final accomplishment of her own aims? at all events, if she failed in it, she would have the gratification of thinking, that a rival, whom she hated for the pangs, no matter how innocently or unintentionally, she had occasioned her, would not triumph over her.

She took care to revert to what had occurred at the abbey the next morning, fearful, if she left any thing to doubt or conjecture, of the failure of her scheme after all. Purposely seeking out Miss Erin, after breakfast, in the garden—"You were no doubt surprised," she said, "last evening," affecting something of an air of confusion, "at discovering that I sometimes met O'Brien; but you'll acquit me, I hope, of any very great imprudence, when I inform you, that I certainly should not have done so, could I have prevailed on him to visit here, but which I found it impossible to do; I am sure I don't know why; and it was requisite we should sometimes see

each other, in order to make arrangements; for the fact is—but I must entreat your positive silence on the subject, for the present—Mr. Morley's will is constructed in such a manner, that it is necessary I should come to some understanding with his heirs, ere I attempt to alter my condition."

Miss Erin, perhaps unconsciously, stopping to admire some flowers, assured her, as she stooped over them, she might rely on her attending to what she said, though, at the same time, she could not help observing, she thought she might have been satisfied without this injunction to silence—it was what she would have observed.

Between Melville's uncle and sir William Erin a long and intimate friendship, as Melville mentioned to Donaghue, had subsisted; and out of respect and regard to the uncle, sir William was now anxious to pay every possible attention to the nephew; but to hope for his company without his friend, he was perfectly aware would be useless; and as the accomplishment of an object in which his friend, sir

James, was particularly, or rather deeply interested, depended, probably, on Melville's being induced to frequent the Vale, lady Erin's arguments, or representations, were not requisite to have decided him on altering his conduct so far to Donaghue, as to lay himself out more than he had yet done to overcome his evident unwillingness to visiting there; and this also, through at length beginning to think there was no other way of being enabled to form any decided opinion about him, without which he felt he could hardly bring himself to come to any other decision, than by endeavouring to cultivate an intimacy with him. Donaghue, however, satisfied that Melville would not visit either at the Vale, or elsewhere, without him, and beginning, by this time, to be sensible that he could not persevere in the reserve and distance he had hitherto maintained in the neighbourhood, without incurring the imputation of an oddity, rendered, by the consequent determination he came to, any very extraordinary exertions for this un-

necessary, as sir William found, on renewing his invitation to the Vale; and since he found himself compelled to go there, Donaghue knew not how to regret what had occurred at the abbey, since, to a certainty, the belief it could not but create, must, he conceived, acquit him in the eyes of the cold and wary father of those designs his conduct implied him fearful of his entertaining, and which, without indignation, he could not think of being suspected of harbouring.

CHAPTER V.

" I pray, sir, tell me, is it possible
That love should of a sudden take such hold?
Oh, Francis! till I found it to be true, I never thought
It possible, or likely. But see! while idle I stood
Looking on, I found the effect in idleness; and
Now in plainness do confess to thee, thou art to
Me as sacred and as dear as Anna to the queen
Of Carthage was. Francis, I burn, I pine, I perish,
If I achieve not this young modest girl!"

LATE as was Mr. O'Connor's party, Melville rose earlier than usual the next morning, and pursuing a path altogether new to him, found himself, at the end of a walk of three miles, before a neat white cottage, which so particularly struck him, as to occasion him to slacken his pace the moment he came within sight of it; woodbine, roses, and jasmine, wantoned in profusion over the front, while a still greater variety of shrubs, plants, and flowers, em-

balming the breath of morn, embellished the little lawn before it. Sloping down to a clear purling rivulet, over which a rustic bridge was thrown, leading to a gate of a similar description, a green lane ran at the side of the house, along which extended, to some distance, a beautiful quickset hedge, dividing a well-cultivated and delicious garden in the rear from it, while the views all around were pleasing and picturesque, without any of that savage wildness that distinguished some of the others in the neighbourhood.

How long Melville might have continued admiring the simple elegance and rural beauty of the place we know not, had not the sound of voices from the garden behind the cottage suddenly reached his ear, and made him hastily turn up the lane at the side of it, where he had not advanced many yards ere he espied two young lasses, sitting in an arbour in the garden, the one reading, the other working, and in whom, at the first glance, he

recognised his new acquaintances of the preceding night. Lavinia Audley and Rosetta Wheatley, indeed, seldom knew what it was to indulge in luxurious indolence; the cool, the silent, and the fragrant hour, was to them a delightful one indeed, and the rising sun a spectacle of grandeur they conceived well worth the relinquishment of an hour's sleep to behold.

Melville had hardly taken his station at the hedge, when a little dog, that was lying at their feet, disturbed or displeased by the sight of a stranger, flew out to bark at him. Miss Wheatley, who was the one that was reading, interrupted by his noise, looked up to call him back, and in so doing, perceived Melville. Touching the elbow of her companion—"I protest, Lavinia," she cried, as she drew back her head, "if I don't believe there's your partner of last night!"

"Where?" exclaimed Lavinia, raising her eyes from her work. "I declare so it is," glancing out from the arbour. "What

can have brought him here I wonder? does he know 'tis here we live?"

"'Tis likely he may, for if he asked Mrs. O'Connor, no doubt she told him."

"But then what use his coming, for he can never think of our considering him as an acquaintance?"

"I can't say what he may think, but if you want to know what I think, I conceive it not improbable he may, as I conceive he has quite sufficient self-complacency to induce such an idea."

"Yes, quite sufficient of that indeed," assented Lavinia; "I noticed that several times last night, insomuch as more than once to have almost repented of consenting to dance with him."

"Why, he surely wasn't presumptuous?"

"Why no, not a—what you may call downright presumptuous; not indeed what could be called or considered so in a person in one's own rank—but then in his! I really could not help staring at him several times, from the dictatorial manner in which he spoke, as if it could be sup-

posed he knew any thing, or had entirely forgot who he was."

"Yes, I thought he appeared confident and conceited, but I suppose he has been cried up for his looks, and so it is that that has rendered him so; he is rather, to be sure, what you may call a well-looking young man."

"Yes, indeed, or rather what we might call handsomish, if he was in another rank of life."

"At all events," observed Rosetta, "he was the only decent person for you to dance with last night, the rest were all such a terrible set of jiggers."

"Is he gone yet?" asked Lavinia—"but no, I declare not," peeping herself through the side of the arbour, "there he is, as stationary as a maypole; I protest it will be a very awkward thing if he should lay himself out for any recognition from us, for, strangers as we are in the neighbourhood, we cannot be too particular in the acquaintance we form, lest, appearing to know people of one description should

prevent our being noticed by those of another."

"Oh! he does not belong, you know, to this part of the country," said her friend; "and should we meet him while he remains, we must only shew, by our manner, that we are decided on not allowing him to consider himself an acquaintance."

"Yes, that will be the only plan for us to pursue; however, I must confess I cannot help being sorry now that we went to Mrs. O'Connor's; but it was all my fault, never resting till I contrived to have an invitation procured for us, from my wild curiosity to witness a real Irish entertainment;—but do silence that noisy little wretch, her barking is not endurable."

"Impossible," said Miss Wheatley; "I could not raise my voice without betraying where we are, which, at present, it might be as well to avoid."

"Well, I declare, let the consequence of doing so be what it may, I can no longer bear the noise; and so—'Mabel!

Mabel!" she exclaimed, starting up and running towards her, "be silent I say!"

"I hope I see you well, ma'am, after your dancing?" said Melville, raising his hat to salute her.

"Oh dear, Mr. a——" affecting an air of pretty surprise. "Yes, very well, I thank you, sir; but dancing is an amusement that agrees extremely well with me."

"But the question was unnecessary," said Melville, as he leant over the hedge, "to a person with cheeks like roses."

"Cheeks like roses," and Lavinia put up her pretty lip a little contemptuously; but what else but a common compliment could be expected from such a person, the cousin of the elegant Mrs. O'Connor, and of the disconsolate Nelly Rooney, to say nothing of his being a descendant of the trumpeter of one of king William's ginirals!

Melville noticed the turn of her pretty lip.—"You seem to ridicule my compliment, ma'am," said he; "but it is not because a thing is commonplace it should

be derided; flowers at all times have furnished metaphors, and allusions, and similies, and I don't think any thing can be more apposite than the comparison between a blooming cheek and a rose, and I only wish," plucking, as he spoke, one of the roses that was flaunting over the hedge, "that I had a looking-glass here at this moment to convince you of it; but I have been admiring, for this some time, this sweet little paradise of yours—really worthy of the fair deities that have made it their abode; and, by-the-bye, how is your charming friend, ma'am? I thought I had a glimpse of her in the arbour."

"Perhaps you might," said Lavinia, half-laughing, not well knowing whether to be most amused or displeased by this assumption of a manner she conceived foreign to his rank.

"What a sweet retreat to pass the sultry hours of noon in! but I presume you do not confine yourself entirely to it—you doubtless walk a good deal?"

"Yes, sometimes."

"I wish I knew when and where?"

"Why so, pray?"

"Why because I should try to profit by the circumstance."

"You!" said Lavinia; but any further comment on the declaration was prevented by a summons to breakfast at the moment; and with something very much resembling a derisive smile she turned off, and darting towards the arbour to meet Rosetta, proceeded with her to the house.

"Pray who is that young man?" asked Mr. Wheatley, addressing himself to Lavinia as they sat at breakfast, "who was conversing so familiarly with you this morning over the hedge?"

Lavinia coloured, and hesitated.

"The young man she danced with last night at Mrs. O'Connor's," said Rosetta, replying for her; and she proceeded to mention all they had heard about him.

"He seemed to be very much at his ease I think," rejoined Mr. Wheatley.

"Oh yes, very much indeed," said La-

vinia, recovering from her transient embarrassment—an embarrassment she knew not how to account for; "he is quite an Irishman in that respect."

"What brought him here?" demanded Mr. Wheatley.

Rosetta laughed.—"Indeed I do not know, except, as I shrewdly suspect, that Lavinia has made a conquest of him."

"That would be a bad affair for the young man," said Mr. Wheatley, gravely, "for Lavinia has no heart to dispose of."

Lavinia, colouring like crimson, started, and looking earnestly at him—"No heart to dispose of!" she repeated.

"No, not of your own free will. How often have I told you that you must never think of disposing of it without the permission of your friend or guardian!"

The conversation was changed. Mr Wheatley, not at liberty to gratify the anxious curiosity which the mention of this unknown guardian always excited, never made any allusion to him, except when he deemed it absolutely necessary;

but immediately after breakfast, Lavinia, finding herself alone with Rosetta—"Well, I wonder," she said, waking, as if from a kind of trance or reverie, "will the mystery of this guardian of mine be ever explained? it is really high time I think it now should, that I may know in what light to consider or regard him; for while ignorant of the claim he has upon my gratitude, my sentiments towards him must certainly continue dubious."

"Well, really," said Rosetta, "from the care that has been taken of you, and the education you have received, I should conceive you could not be at any possible loss to know what claim he had upon your gratitude."

"Ay, so it may appear," said Lavinia, "but for me to allow him fully entitled to it, I feel it necessary to ascertain whether what he has done for me has been through a sense of duty, or from the mere dictates of benevolence; for if nearly connected to him, you must acknowledge my right to all that has been done: in short, I am ex-

cessively discontented at not yet being informed who he is, or any thing about him, since the means of still keeping me in ignorance concerning myself; and really 'tis extremely embarrassing, and very awkward, not to know who I am, or what I am, whether I have tumbled from the clouds, or sprung out of the earth, unconnected with any one."

"Well," cried Rosetta, "I conceive it hardly possible for you to doubt, from the pains, as I have already observed, that have been taken with you in every instance, that the deepest interest is entertained about you."

"True," replied Lavinia, "but then I want to know in what that interest originates; in short, a thousand frightful fancies have suggested themselves to me; we have more than once heard and read of old men having young girls educated for their wives."

"Well, I think," said Rosetta, "you might be satisfied that my father would

not lend himself to any thing that was unjust or tyrannical."

"Ah! but such a thing might not strike him as either. You see how, on every occasion, he tries to impress me with a conviction of his having a positive authority over me; telling me, indeed, that I must not presume to like any one without his permission! Were these fairy times, the only way to guard against any danger of that kind would be to take out my heart and lodge it in a mountain of ice, as we have read of in those delightful nursery tales, till the proper person appeared, according to his idea, for bestowing it on."

"Whoever that may be, I am convinced," said Rosetta, "it will be some one in an elevated rank of life; for, from the manner in which you have been taught to estimate yourself, 'tis evident to me he entertains high expectations for you."

Some time after this conversation, as they were sitting at work with Mrs. Wheatley in the parlour—"Dear, what a delightful morning," said Lavinia, sudden-

ly, "and how I should like to take a walk!"

"A delightful morning!" repeated Mrs. Wheatley; "it was fine, but I certainly think it very much changed now—it appears to me as if there would be rain."

"Oh dear, no, ma'am," said Lavinia; "what you take for threatening clouds are merely a few light vapours blown from the sea."

"Well, I must differ from you; so if really anxious for a walk, I advise you to confine yourself to the garden."

"Oh no," replied Lavinia, "that does very well for sauntering about in, but when one really wishes for a walk, nothing can be more tiresome than its eternal turnings and windings."

"The fact is, you are in a restless humour this morning, Lavinia, and must therefore, I suppose, be indulged in your humour."

"Well, I believe I am," said Lavinia; so jumping up, and throwing aside her work—"Will you come, Rosetta?"

"What, to take a walk? Ah, I suppose I may as well say yes at once, for if not, I dare say you would not cease teazing me."

In a few minutes both were equipped for going out. On Lavinia's returning to the parlour—"Why you are not going out such a threatening morning as this in your new bonnet, Lavinia?" said Mrs. Wheatley.

"Oh dear, yes, ma'am, the other is such a fright."

"A fright! And who do you expect to meet, pray?"

"To meet! to meet!" cried Lavinia, blushing, and half laughing—"who do we expect to meet? I am sure I do not know; do you, Rosetta?"

Without waiting to hear what answer her daughter would make—"Well, since you will risk yourself and your bonnet," said Mrs. Wheatley, "be advised by me, and take an umbrella with you."

"An umbrella!" and Lavinia regarded her with almost a look of horror.

"Let Owen then attend you to carry it for you, since 'tis a thing you have such an objection to do yourself, or let Rosetta."

"Owen!" Really this was almost as bad; to have a great lubberly footman following them, imposing quite a restraint upon their movements. So they set off, without taking an umbrella with them, or allowing Owen, that is, Lavinia, to follow with one. They had not got above half-a-mile, however, when Miss Lavinia, who had a very great regard for her new bonnet, from being assured by every one, as well as her glass, that it became her exceedingly, began to regret her inattention to the advice of Mrs. Wheatley, in consequence of some heavy drops beginning to fall, the evident precursors of a heavy shower.—"Dear! what shall we do?" she said; "these parasols will hardly be of any use to us from the rain that is coming on."

"Hardly indeed!" replied Rosetta. "And now you see, Lavinia, what the consequence of being conceited and obstinate is."

"I protest," said Lavinia, half withdrawing her arm from her, "if you attempt to give me a lecture now, when I am in such distress, I will positively run away, and leave you to bide the pelting of the pitiless storm by yourself; and there is comfort for you, we are just near our favourite beech tree, under which we may safely shelter ourselves, as I think there is no danger of any lightning."

They quickened their steps to get to it, but suddenly stopped within a few paces of it, on perceiving a person already under its shelter.—"That abominable nephew of Mrs. O'Connor, I protest!" said Lavinia.

"Really!" cried Rosetta. "I am afraid he will soon be as bad as a ghost, haunting our steps wherever we go."

Ere Lavinia could reply, Melville, stepping forward—"Ladies," said he, "you will drive me from the shelter which this friendly tree affords, if you allow me to think I am the means of preventing you also profiting by it."

"Oh! certainly no," said Lavinia, but

drawing back on his attempting to take her hand to lead her forward to it.

Rosetta, though of the two the most displeased at meeting him, was the most gracious, condescending to answer him, and thank him for the pains he took in placing them so as to be out of the reach of the rain; while Lavinia still turned to her companion whenever he spoke to her, as if to laugh with her at him. At length, beginning to get uneasy at the idea of Rosetta's exposure to the damp, who had for some time been rather in a delicate state of health—"Oh dear!" she said, "if we had but a messenger to send to Mr. Malone's (a farmhouse at a little distance), I dare say we should be able to get their jaunting-car."

"In this instance, ma'am," said Melville, "'tis only to wish and have; in me behold a humble servitor, who will be as happy to do your bidding as ever the attendant sprite of Prospero was to do his; let me know where Mrs. Malone's is?"

Lavinia unhesitatingly gave him the re-

quired direction, and as he flew off, Lavinia observed, that though certainly awkward and embarrassing their having encountered him, yet, in the present instance, it was well their having done so, from his proving so serviceable.

He quickly returned with the car, crammed with cloaks and umbrellas. Having assisted the ladies in muffling themselves up, and handed them into the ear—"Well, ladies," he said, still keeping the door of the vehicle open in his hand, "am I to bid you good-bye now?"

Lavinia was now on the point, for the first time, of eagerly answering him, but checking herself, she looked at Rosetta.

"Oh no, assuredly not," said Rosetta; "that is," hesitating, "if you are coming our way."

"Thank you, my dear ma'am," cried Melville, and without further ceremony he sprung into the car, and shutting the door, took the umbrella, which he had expanded over the head of Lavinia, out of her hand, to hold it over her himself.

The servant belonging to the car drove with such rapidity, that a few minutes brought them back to Rosehill. Owen came running out to open the gate for them, and from him they learned, that, shortly after their leaving home, Mrs. Wheatley had also gone out to pay a visit at a house in the neighbourhood, where she still was, so that Lavinia was saved the embarrassment of meeting her immediately.

On the mufflings being thrown aside, it was ascertained that their clothes had not got a drop of rain; of course, this called for a renewal of acknowledgments to Melville, to whom they were entirely indebted for the circumstance; and conscious of this, after a little hesitation—"Perhaps you would like to step in, and take some refreshment, sir?" said Rosetta.

"I should certainly like to step in, but not to take refreshment," replied Melville; and motioning them to precede him, he followed them into the parlour.

Here, seated at a table, over which some

books and papers were scattered, they found Mr. Wheatley. Looking up as they entered, his surprise at seeing by whom they were accompanied checked what he had been on the point of saying. He instantly recognised Melville to be the young man whom he had seen conversing with Lavinia in the morning; and certainly much displeased at now seeing him, after regarding him for a moment, with a look indicative of surprise, he turned his looks inquiringly on the young ladies.

Lavinia, perfectly comprehending, and extremely disconcerted by them—"The—the young—the gentleman we met last night at Mrs. O'Connor's, sir," she said; "he was so—so good——" and she proceeded to mention how they had encountered him now, and the service he had been of to them.

Mr. Wheatley stiffly bowed—"You must be obliged to the gentleman," he gravely said, "for taking so much trouble; after his doing so, I should think it not amiss your offering him some refreshment."

"The young ladies have had the goodness to do that already, sir," said Melville, highly diverted by this scene, and, in order to heighten it, taking a chair, without further ceremony, and beginning to chat and look about him, in a manner perfectly calculated to excite surprise, to say nothing of any other feeling, from the mistake under which the party were about him.

After conversing for some time, if that could be called conversation which he had almost entirely to himself, casting his eyes upon a grand pianoforte—"I need not ask which of you ladies play on this delightful instrument, as I conclude you both do," he said; "but may I ask which of you will oblige me with a tune on it?"

Rosetta and Lavinia looked at each other, without answering him.

"You don't know how you will oblige me," he resumed, "if it is only for five minutes you allow me to hear you."

"Well, really," said Lavinia, rising with an air of careless indifference, and approaching the instrument, "I don't think

there is any music here will please you; nothing but some of Handel's, and Haydn's, and——Where is that old book of country-dances, Rosetta?" she asked, turning to her; "but no matter, I think I recollect some of them;" and sitting down, she played Patrick's Day in the Morning, and one or two other things in the same style, and then rising—"There, now, you are satisfied?" she said.

"No, by no means," replied Melville; "if, indeed, you were to play me one of those fine compositions you mentioned."

"Really I don't see any use there would be in that, for to be able to derive pleasure from them, a knowledge of music is——but since you so wish to hear one of them," and turning again, with carelessness, to the instrument, she went through one of Haydn's beautiful lessons, but in so slovenly a manner, as either intimated that she cared not how she played, or thought, that had she played in any other manner, her condescension for having done so at all, in the present instance, would

have been too great; but instead of the humble thanks she expected for this condescension—"What a pity," said Melville, when she had concluded, "that a person, who can play, as I clearly perceive you can, should play that fine lesson in the manner you did! When I was a little boy, almost the first maxim that was impressed upon my memory was, to do whatever I attempted to do in the best manner I possibly could, as habits of inattention and carelessness are much sooner acquired than lost."

Lavinia coloured, and stared at him—"Why, do you understand any thing of music?" she asked.

"Sufficient, at least," replied Melville, laughing at her look, "to find fault."

The pride of Lavinia was now piqued, and without further questioning, she resumed her seat, and dashed through one of Handel's compositions in the most brilliant style.—"Well, now!" she said, in an exulting tone, as she rose from the instrument.

"Ay, now, indeed," said Melville, "you did justice to yourself and this fine instrument; and now you shall also find," laughing, "that I understand music sufficiently to praise."

Mr. Wheatley could no longer command himself—could no longer endure this assumption of equality, and the presumption it led to. Pulling out his watch, and looking at it—"Miss Audley," he gravely, perhaps a little sternly, said, "I thought I understood you had a letter to write by this day's post."

"Y-e-s, sir," replied Lavinia, in a hesitating tone, extremely disconcerted by his manner.

"Then why forget? you have hardly time enough to write it."

"Pray, pray, use no ceremony with me, my dear ma'am," said Melville, in a tone of *nonchalance* that had the effect of almost transporting Mr. Wheatley into a rage; "and now that it is called to my recollection, I rather think I have a letter to write myself; so adieu! adieu!" to her

and Rosetta—" adieu, sir !" turning to Mr. Wheatley.

" That young man must never, on any pretence whatever, obtain admission here again," said Mr. Wheatley, the moment he had departed ; " and should you, by any chance, encounter him again, which I think not unlikely, from his extreme effrontery, I must insist on no notice being taken of him. A pretty dangler, truly, the cousin of Mrs. O'Connor! but this is the consequence of having given way to your whim, Miss Audley, of going to such a place, or rather of your own imprudence, in suffering yourself to be induced to dance with any one there. I did imagine your pride would have prevented any thing of the kind: however, I see the giddiness of girls renders it impossible for any dependance to be placed on them. If you wish to avoid the risk of doing yourself an injury, you will follow my advice about this young man; for I must now inform you, that through the kind interference of

your guardian, you are on the very eve of being admitted to the acquaintance of the family at Ashley Vale, for the purpose of being introduced, by them, into life; and I need not say how awkward and embarrassing it would be, to have such a person as this Mr. Scanlen addressing and following you as an acquaintance, or admirer, in their society, or how completely such a circumstance might be the means of frustrating your guardian's intentions, in getting you noticed by them."

"Upon my word and honour," said Lavinia, on finding herself again alone, soon after this lecture, with Rosetta, "this guardian of mine is really making quite a bashaw of this father of yours; he insists, and——"

"Yet I think you can hardly wonder at his language being so peremptory, when you consider that he must feel himself answerable for you, from your having been intrusted to his care," said Rosetta.

"Ay, true," replied the other; "but then I don't think it was necessary to

speak, altogether, in so dictatorial a manner: one may be just barely civil to a person, without being blamed or scolded, I think. However, to let the subject drop, let us now speak of Ashley Vale. Are not you absolutely enraptured at the thoughts of visiting there?"

"I!" cried Rosetta.

"Yes, you," fondly kissing her cheek; "do you think I will visit there without you?"

"No, no," replied Rosetta, "that is out of the question my ever even going there. In the first place, my father, as you well know, has always objected to my being introduced into society beyond what I had a right, uniformly, to expect to mix in; and in the next——but can you—can you forget?" and involuntarily covering her face with her hands, she burst into tears.

"How could I be so careless?" cried Lavinia, evidently greatly distressed—"no, no, I do not forget."

"Then how could you imagine," a little reproachfully, "that I could take plea-

sure in the idea of visiting there, or, indeed, be induced, by any circumstance, to go there? for do you not know the pain, the fear, the reluctance, with which I thought of coming into this neighbourhood, on lord Altidore's account—how almost entirely, from a dread of meeting him, I have avoided going into society since I came here?"

"Yes, I know all that," said Lavinia, "perfectly; but if you could conquer your dread of meeting him again, do you not think——"

"No, no," interrupted Rosetta, impatiently—"no, I know what you would say; but you are mistaken; and not for worlds would I meet lord Altidore again, lest he should conceive I threw myself in his way, from such a hope as you have insinuated—a hope, which a moment's reflection on what you have heard, of his being a suitor for the hand of Miss Erin, must tell you would be ridiculous to indulge in."

"Well, well," said Lavinia, "I will ne-

ver touch on the subject again; but, indeed, half the pleasure I anticipated from going to the Vale will be lost from your not accompanying me to it."

"Oh! but consider," said Rosetta, recovering from the agitation she had been thrown into, and wiping away her tears, "you will have the gratification of talking over with me, almost immediately, every thing you see or meet with there, and that will be almost the same thing as if I went with you."

Mrs. Wheatley had been to pay a visit to a Mrs. Brabazon, where there were a good many young people, and she brought a message to the two girls, inviting them to a little dance there that evening.

Rosetta, whose spirits had been a good deal discomposed, at once declined going; and Lavinia, on her account, did the same. This was so evident to Rosetta, and who, besides, was more inclined to musing than conversing that evening, that she made it an absolute point her going.

On its being mentioned at dinner—

"And pray who are to be at Mrs. Brabazon's?" demanded Mr. Wheatley, abruptly.

"Oh! merely a few young people belonging to the neighbourhood," replied his wife.

"Are you sure?"

"Yes, certain."

"And you really wish to go?" he said, turning to Lavinia; "I should have thought your dance last night might have sufficed for three or four nights."

"Lord, my dear! you forget when you were young yourself," said his wife. "I only wish Rosetta resembled Lavinia a little more than she does, in her natural love of gaiety."

"I am quite as well satisfied as it is," replied Mr. Wheatley drily; "however, Miss Audley, since you must go, I desire Owen may attend you, since I cannot do it myself, from being obliged to go out immediately after dinner; and remember I charge you, when he is sent for you at night, he is not sent back without you,

under the pretext of there being some one else to see you home."

Lavinia bowed assentingly; but the moment he was gone—"I declare it is quite preposterous," she said, "the parade of having Owen striding after one wherever they go."

"Why, to be sure, the distance is so very short a one to Mrs. Brabazon's," said Mrs. Wheatley; "and I certainly did want him very much this evening, for it is quite time the currants should be picked for the wine; and if once he gets out, he is such a loiterer."

"Then, for goodness sake, keep him at home, my dear ma'am," said Lavinia, and away she ran to get her bonnet, and in another minute, she was on the way to Mrs. Brabazon's.

She had just turned up a rural lane, leading to the house, when—"How do you do this fine evening, ma'am, after your misadventure of the morning?" exclaimed a voice from behind a hawthorn

hedge at one side of it, and the next moment Melville sprang over a gate, and was at her side.

Lavinia started back, and—"Really this is very——" extraordinary, she was on the point of adding.

"What!" said Melville, as if he understood what she had been near saying—"is it my enjoying this delightful evening, as well as yourself?"

"No, sir, a very different one; I am going to drink tea at a lady's just by."

"Indeed! really I am glad of it, for I was just wishing for tea, and you will introduce me as your friend."

"Me!" repeated Lavinia—"no, indeed, you must excuse me; that is a liberty I should hardly think of taking—introducing a person I hardly know myself, and whom I must now beg leave to inform ——"

"Nay," cried Melville, interrupting her, "you don't know how you will grieve me, if you persist in regarding me in the light of a person you hardly know."

"Then whether it does, or not, I must say——"

"Nothing ill-natured—but don't discompose yourself; if you won't introduce me, I will introduce myself."

"No, I should hope you would not attempt any thing of the kind," said Lavinia, in an alarmed tone—"that really would be too—too presuming."

"Oh, by no means; the Irish are very accessible good kind of people, and I dare say your friend won't consider it so;" and so, without further ceremony, he walked up with her to Mrs. Brabazon's gate, and followed her into the parlour, to which there was a glass door from the lawn.

Lavinia felt very angry; however, if she did not introduce him, she conceived she could not possibly get into any scrape about him, and not to do so she therefore positively determined. This, however, was of very little consequence in the present instance: Mrs. Brabazon, a careless, good-humoured woman, required nothing more than his having come with her, to

give him a most gracious reception; and Lavinia could not help being surprised at seeing him, in a minute, as much at his ease in this party of strangers, as he had been the preceding night at his cousin O'Connor's, laughing with, and complimenting the ladies, and assisting the gentlemen in doing the honours of the tea-table.

Well, really she did not know what to do; she saw he was making acquaintances as fast as he could, and what might not be the consequence, when it came to be known who he really was! and so, after a good deal of consultation with herself, she thought her best plan would be to explain, satisfied, that having once done so, she could not be justly condemned, or blamed, for any thing that might occur from his having appeared to be her acquaintance.

"Well, really," exclaimed Mrs. Brabazon, in reply to her whispered explanation, "who would ever have thought such a thing! that nice, genteel young man the cousin of O'Connor's wife! But don't vex

yourself, my dear, at his having made his way in here along with you—there was a great deal of assurance, to be sure, in it; and—but really he looks so pleasant, I don't think I could find in my heart to say any thing ill-natured to him; but we must just tell the girls who he is, that none of them should dance with him."

The young ladies were accordingly beckoned to her, and in the course of another minute, there was an end of any further smiles or glances to Melville.

His amusement at the scene was indescribable—the distress of Lavinia, the explanation it led to, and the instantaneous effect this explanation had upon the party. Affecting, however, not to know that any alteration was affected towards him, as soon as they began to prepare for dancing, he severally addressed himself to every young lady whom he saw, at the moment, disengaged, in the room, to solicit her hand, but was, of course, or as he expected, received with a titter by some, as if diverted by his effrontery in asking it, and a vacant

stare in others, as if they could not imagine he was serious. Pretending great mortification, he retreated to a corner, where, for some time, he sat, apparently in utter disconsolation.

The dance the party engaged in was a quadrille, but, with the exception of Lavinia, there was hardly any one of them knew any thing about it; the consequence was, that there was nothing but confusion and apologizing.

Melville, at length starting up from his seat—"Come, come," said he, "this will do no longer; I must take upon myself to be master of the ceremonies here;" and interrupting the dancers, he began instructing them in the figure they had been trying to blunder through; then suddenly turning to Lavinia—"Come," said he, "you and I will shew them what I mean;" and without further ceremony, he took her from her partner, and calling to the music to begin again, the dancing was renewed.

Lavinia again knew not whether to be pleased or displeased, or rather which to

appear to be, for, in reality, she could not feel displeased at being released from a partner, who had utterly exhausted her patience by his ignorance and stupidity; but then not to seem to resent the freedom that had been taken, so unbecoming in the person that had taken it, but to counterfeit what she did not feel, was, in this instance, impossible. Melville danced incomparably—she saw every one admiring him—and the frown she had tried to assume, gave way to the delight she felt at having such a partner. But where could he have acquired this knowledge of dancing? where the one he evidently had of music? the air of even striking fashion that distinguished him from every other person in the room? it really was strange, extraordinary—and could it have been forgot that he was Denny Scanlen, the cousin of a common miller's wife, she would have been obliged to acknowledge that he was a person whom no one need be ashamed, or unwilling, to own as an acquaintance. But this was a recollection that

haunted and disquieted her; and more than once she involuntarily wished, with a sigh, that it had been otherwise than it was—that, in short, he had been in a rank in which one might have taken that notice of him she was now beginning to think he merited, for every moment he gained upon her—what had, at first, appeared presumptuous confidence, being now evidently nothing more than the ease of a well-informed, collected mind, conscious of a claim to distinction from innately-felt superiority.—"What a character for the patronage of a person in power!" she thought—"what a gratification to any one of feeling, to think of being the means of elevating such a being above the sordid condition in which his birth had placed him! but it was very improbable that he should encounter any one with ability to be his patron, and she again sighed at the thought of the interest he inspired being of very little avail to him. She knew not how it was, the spirit with which she had commenced dancing gra-

dually forsook her, and more than once she went wrong, through downright inattention to what she was about, to the no small amusement of those at whose blunders she had previously been laughing.

Matters were now completely reversed; Melville, from having been utterly neglected and scorned, was now absolutely hung upon and caressed, for the sake of the instruction he had the power of giving, every one suddenly agreeing that he really was so good-humoured obliging a creature, it would be a thousand pities not to be, in some degree, civil to him.

In the midst of his triumph, Owen was announced; and Lavinia knowing Mr. Wheatley would be displeased if she delayed a moment after being sent for, immediately prepared to depart.

There had been again some rain, and in consequence the car was sent for her. A young lady, living in her direction, hearing this, said she would avail herself of the circumstance, to be dropped at home,

rather than, by waiting a little longer, be obliged to walk through the wet roads.

Lavinia saw that Melville, though engaged in making up a set for a new quadrille, had still his eye upon her, and fearful of his attempting to see her home, gave a hint to Mrs. Brabazon of her wish to be allowed to steal away, and which, through her assistance, she accordingly contrived to do.

A long dusky avenue led up from the road, through a kind of wilderness, to the habitation of her companion, who expressing a dread of going up it at such a time by herself, Lavinia desired Owen to alight and see her to the house, not being afraid of being left for a few minutes by herself, from there being a few cabins at the other side of the road, in which the people were still up.

But hardly was she left to herself, ere she was thrown into the greatest confusion, by seeing Melville approaching; unwilling, from the revolution her sentiments had undergone respecting him, to

hurt his feelings, by any intimation of what he might expect from Mr. Wheatley, should he attempt to accompany her home, yet at a loss to know how she should couch her refusal to permit him, if he made the request, in terms sufficiently strong to prevent him, without wounding them herself.

"So you stole away?" said Melville, coming up to the car; "but slyly as you managed it, I soon discovered the loss we had sustained, and instantly made my parting bow; for there was then no longer any interest or attraction in the scene for me."

"Oh, well, don't let me detain you now," said Lavinia, with a flurried voice; "the ground is damp, and I expect the servant back every moment."

"But I am going your way, and an additional escort might not be amiss."

"Oh, no, no!" exclaimed Lavinia, and she eagerly put out her hand to draw in the door, which Owen had neglected to close, upon the alighting of her com-

panion. In doing so, she did not perceive that, as Melville's arm rested on the edge of the car, his hand lay carelessly dangling in the way of it; nor was he aware of what she was about, till, with a sudden jirk, he felt it jamming in his fingers.

The excruciating agony occasioned by the accident caused an involuntary exclamation to that effect to escape him.

"Good God! what have I done?" cried Lavinia, in the wildest consternation—"Crushed your hand, I fear, to atoms!"

"No, no," cried Melville; "pray don't agitate yourself; the injury, I am sure, is of no consequence;" but as he spoke he grew deadly sick, and feeling himself stagger, caught at the car for support.

Lavinia screamed, and the people from the adjacent cabins came running out. Melville took hold of the arm of a man, and went into one of them, where, throwing himself on a seat, he called for some water.

Lavinia, springing from the car, followed him—"And what have I done? what

have I done?" she exclaimed, in the greatest distress.

Again Melville besought her to compose herself, assuring her he was convinced the accident was of no serious consequence.

"Oh! how can you say so?" cried Lavinia, taking up his hand, and uttering a loud shriek at the state in which she saw it, with the blood gushing from the ends of the fingers—"Oh! how can you say so?" unconsciously pressing it to her lips, and beginning to bind it up with her own handkerchief. "But I know what your reason is; but you cannot deceive me, nor can I ever forgive myself for my carelessness; and then to think I can make no amends for it!" and she burst into tears; for the least she thought she could have done, after what had happened, would have been to have sent him home in the car with Owen; but this she durst not do, for fear of Mr. Wheatley, whom she trembled to think of even knowing they had met.

"See," said Melville, rising, and appear-

ing to shake off the faintness that had come over him; "see," said he, taking one of the fair hands that had been so busily engaged about him, and pressing it, with a look, not merely of admiration, but of passionate fondness to his heart, "I am well already, and quite ashamed of having been overcome by so slight a matter."

"Slight! oh, I wish I could be convinced of that! But how will it be possible I should? How shall I be able to know whether you get better or worse? for I cannot ask you to call at——that—that is, I—I mean I cannot give you the trouble of calling at Mr. Wheatley's."

Melville perfectly understood her meaning, for neither the looks or manner of Mr. Wheatley had been lost upon him; and so—"Well," he said, perhaps a little artfully, "should I be able to come out to-morrow—which I am sure I shall," with quickness he added, on seeing her turn of a deadly paleness at the bare surmise that he would not, "I shall be in the lane at

the side of your house in the morning about eight, and should I meet with any one that I think may be intrusted with a message to you, shall certainly send one to let you know how I am, since you have so kindly condescended to express such anxiety about me."

"And you'll be sure not to forget?" said Lavina, with earnestness.

"Forget," cried Melville, "what is connected with your idea! Memory must be lost, ere any thing associated with that can be effaced from my recollection."

"Oh! I see you are getting better," said Lavinia, brightly blushing, and with something of her wonted archness of look; and—"There, I hear the servant's voice!" and drawing away her hand, she flew from the cabin without allowing him to say another word, and darting across the road, sprung into the car, and was instantly driven away, accounting to Owen, who had been quite frightened at missing her, by saying that a slight accident had oc-

curred to a person on the road, which had occasioned her alighting to see if she could render any service.

She had given Mrs. Brabazon a hint to say nothing of Melville's having accompanied her to her house, lest it should excite the indignation of Mr. Wheatley against him; and as she made sure therefore of the secrecy of all there on the subject, she thought she would say nothing herself about it. Yet so much had she been hitherto in the habit of communicating every thought as it rose to Rosetta, of making her a second self, that she could not now be silent to her respecting the incidents of the evening, without almost a feeling of reproach. But then she knew she should not like to listen to the strictures which she was convinced Rosetta would make upon them; in short, that she should not like to have Denny Scanlen any farther laughed at, or turned into ridicule, and still less to be prevented having any farther communication with him, as she was convinced she should be, if

possible, by Rosetta, out of fear of her father, though only for the purpose of having her anxiety quieted about the accident she had been the means of occasioning him, and which once out of suspense about, she positively, of her own accord, determined to shun him, though no longer considering him in the light of a person whose acquaintance would not be pleasant; but prejudices were arbitrary, and what but ridicule and contempt should she draw upon herself by attempting to represent him in the light in which she now regarded him—that of being entitled, from his manner and appearance, to mix in any society?

A restless night was the consequence of the agitation her nerves had undergone, and to this, we must suppose, was owing her rising even earlier than usual the next morning, and repairing to the garden, to try if the fresh air would be of service to her. Here, after being some time, it certainly occurred to her the great uncertain-

ty there was of Melville's meeting any one with whom he might intrust a message for her. She thought she would just venture into the adjoining fields, feeling she would be quite miserable if she did not see or hear something about him that day, and keeping along the hedge that divided them from the lane, watch for him herself, but of course without letting him see her.

In the mean time Melville, with both his head and his heart full of her idea, had returned to the castle, where he was passing to his chamber, in order to get his own man to examine his hand, when he encountered doctor Rosebud, just come back from his friend, Mr. Medlicott's.

"Heyday! what's the matter?" exclaimed Rosebud, catching a glimpse of his bound-up hand.

"Pooh! nothing, my dear sir," replied Melville, affecting a laugh, and attempting to pass him as he spoke.

"I am not so sure of that," said the other, catching him by the arm; and at this instant Donaghue, hearing their voices,

came out from the parlour; and Melville, perceiving any further argument with Rosebud would be useless, proceeded thither to let him examine his hand.

"Nothing!" cried the latter, as he unbound it, "nothing do you call this? Well, all I shall say is, that, upon my soul, if your heart has got as bad a squeeze as your fingers, you are in a bad way, my good sir. But, upon my veracity, this has very much the appearance of some freak or frolic. I hope you are not turning a Henry the Fourth upon our hands—making love to the handsome wife of some miller hereabouts."

"What, you judge of others by yourself, Mr. Doctor," said Melville, "I suppose; but come, my good sir, a little of your opodeldoc, and all will be well again."

"I am not so sure of that," cried the doctor; "'tis a very ugly accident."

"For Heaven's sake, Sedley, how did you meet with it?" asked Donaghue.

"Tut! what signifies?" replied Melville,

a little embarrassed by the question, but trying to hide his confusion under a laugh —" You really, my good friends, remind me of an old lady, who, whenever she got a cold, tormented herself and every body about her, by endeavouring to ascertain, not how she could cure it, but how she had got it."

" Humph !" said the doctor. " I see we can all practise a little evasion, when 'tis necessary; but——" and he glanced at the handkerchief, which he saw, from the size, was a lady's, as he took it off.

But Melville was too quick for him— snatching it up, he thrust it in his bosom.

Donaghue looked suspiciously at him; Melville could not help laughing at the look, though he certainly felt a little disconcerted at any curiosity being excited, since he did not choose to explain, or be in any degree explicit.

Let it not, however, for a moment be supposed it was owing to any feeling or design he could have blushed to acknowledge, but an unwillingness to excite

laughter or remonstrance; one or other of which he should subject himself to, he was convinced, if he confessed all to Donaghue. He would either laugh, he was sure, at his being, what he might term it, so easily caught, or else remonstrate with him on the danger that might accrue from cultivating any further acquaintance with the pretty creature that had so interested him, and he therefore determined to be altogether silent on the subject, more especially as he had said nothing about it in the first instance; for though he had fully determined to mention to Donaghue his frolic at O'Connor's, yet, when at night he joined him, on his return from it, he knew not how it was he felt a disinclination to speak of it; but the fact was, he feared, if he did, any thing that might afterwards happen, his wishing to view Rosehill, and know something more of its inmates, might be imputed to something serious. But that such a feeling, a downright serious passion for the fair Lavinia, was now beginning to pervade

his bosom, he could no longer deny to himself, from the powerful interest she had awakened this evening—through the sensibility, the tenderness of disposition she had evinced—the growing interest for him, spite of the force of prejudice, and the disdain of pride.

To triumph over these, and inspire her with an attachment, in spite of their opposition, was indeed too gratifying a thought not to be dwelt on without rapture. In vain Prudence suggested the embarrassment in which yielding to the feelings it inspired might ultimately be the means of placing him. To be the object of a disinterested attachment to one so exquisitely lovely, was an idea too gratifying, too delightful to self-love, not to overcome almost every other consideration, and determine him to risk something, for the sake of the happiness it might be the means of affording. In short, he was so completely captivated, as wilfully to shut his eyes against all that might result from his giving way to the passion with

which he had been so suddenly inspired. Never had he seen any one possessed of more exquisite loveliness, more bewitching *naïveté*, than his fair enslaver—never any one to be compared with her, in his estimation, except one, that one whom honour and friendship had rendered sacred in his eyes; and to resist her attractions, therefore, he believed to be impossible, from the pleasure he took in yielding to them. Yet, as he was utterly incapable of harbouring a thought injurious to innocence and virtue, had her situation in life been such as to have precluded the idea of a positive engagement with her, he certainly would have resolutely decided at once against acting as he did; but from the respectability, not to say elegance surrounding her, the education she had evidently received, and the watchful care, so indicative of her being of real consequence, with which she was guarded, he was convinced there could be no degradation in an alliance with her; and finally determined on following up the adven-

ture, but with caution and circumspection; since resolved on not disclosing himself till fully satisfied that she was all he now imagined her, that in case of any disappointment to his wishes, and fancied and high-raised expectations, he might not needlessly have perhaps incurred the resentment of his uncle.

His hand being dressed, the doctor advised his keeping it in a sling for a day or two. The advice was not neglected, for he knew it was not calculated to produce an uninteresting effect; and the next morning, at the hour he had mentioned, he was in the lane, reconnoitring for the fair being whom, a little artfully perhaps, as before observed, he had drawn in to make an indirect appointment with him; for, from the anxiety she had evinced about him, he was almost convinced he should find her there watching for him. He had hardly cast his eyes about, when a glimpse of a white dress, through the hedge that extended from the garden to a common at the end of the lane, assured him he was

not mistaken in his expectation. He instantly stopped and coughed, but no one spoke; but in the course of a minute or two, he saw some one evidently trying to steal away.—"And so this is the way," he cried, immediately springing over a stile, a little way farther down, into the field, and hastening to the blushing Lavinia, "you are asking me how I am, after all the concern you flattered me by evincing last night!"

"I am sure I need not say that that concern was not feigned," replied Lavina; "but as I saw you——But, good Heavens! your arm in a sling! Then the accident is, after all, more serious than you would have had me imagine last night?"

"No, no," cried Melville, delighted with her emotion, yet at the same time anxious to sooth her anxiety; "and were it even so, would not your regret be a sufficient compensation for it?"

Lavinia tried to withdraw the hand, with which, unconsciously perhaps, she

had met his extended one as he approached; but he gently detained it—"No, no," he said, "'tis not your breakfast hour yet, and where can there be a more delicious spot for enjoying the freshness of the morning air than this—where, from his grassy bed, we see the lark soaring up to heaven's high gate?" and by speaking in this way he led her to almost imperceptibly betray her favourite walks, and many other matters with which he wished to be acquainted.

Of the knowledge he thus obtained, he failed not to avail himself, by being on the watch to meet her whenever she was unaccompanied by Rosetta, and the consequence of these apparently chance meetings, was the gradual deepening of the interest they had mutually inspired.

But how impossible to describe the confusion and perplexity that now began to pervade the mind of Lavinia! Deserving of condemnation, as she conceived herself, for having been betrayed into any farther acquaintance with Melville, and yet, un-

able as she was to force herself to abruptly terminate it, she shrunk from the thought of what her pride would make her blush to acknowledge, and felt shocked at the idea of having acted in any way that could occasion a rebuke. Yet, notwithstanding this, the high estimation in which she had been taught to hold herself, the natural candour and ingenuousness of her mind, rendering hateful to her any thing that needed deception or concealment, she still could not bring herself to turn aside when she met him, or to remember any thing to his prejudice. It was only when she was not actually listening to him, that the revolting idea of his being Denny Scanlen recurred to her recollection; whilst conversing with him, his name, his condition, were forgotten; or if remembered, it was with a sigh, that they were such as would not entitle him to that society he seemed so qualified to adorn. How she could have viewed him in the light she at first did, now filled her with surprise; but such is the effect of

prejudice to blind our judgment, and render us insensible to real merit. Yet that she had continued to regard him in the same light, or rather had not met him again, which was pretty much the same thing, she could hardly help wishing, from the disquietude her farther knowledge of him had occasioned her. But there would soon be an end of this—she should shortly be introduced into scenes, and mix in society, it would be impossible for him to enter, and her mind would, consequently, be diverted from his idea, and every other feeling of regret, than what must still be continued to be experienced, for ever having been betrayed into any thing of mystery or concealment towards her dear Rosetta, who reposed her entire heart in her bosom, and confidently believed she did the same in return. And why had she not? Because she dreaded her animadversions, or from the awkwardness that would have attended the discovery of her having had concealment in one instance, was led to practise it in another; so true

is it that one error almost invariably leads to another, and that the slightest deviation from the road we should pursue, frequently plunges us into a labyrinth from which we know not how to extricate ourselves.

Fortunately for Lavinia, Melville was really what he appeared to be, not what she imagined, else might her implied encouragement of him have led to the disastrous consequences of drawing her into a connexion that she never would have been forgiven for forming.

CHAPTER VI.

"Fancies and notions we pursue
Which ne'er had being, but in thought;
And like the doting artist, woo
The image he himself had wrought."

MUCH as Melville esteemed the characters of sir William and lady Erin, highly as

he admired Miss Erin, so much so indeed as to have occasioned quite a struggle between honour, and friendship, and inclination, to prevent a growing attachment for her, he was not now quite so anxious, on his own account, to become a visitor at the Vale, as he had been on his first arrival at Altoir-na-Grenie, conceiving his visits there must necessarily interrupt his meetings with the fair inmate of Rosehill; not but that he consoled himself for this, by the reflection, that these occasional interruptions to them would probably be the means of enabling him to ascertain her real feelings for him. But however he might now have desired to keep out of the way of being constantly engaged, neither respect for the wishes of his uncle, nor anxiety about his friend, could prevent his delaying beyond a few days announcing his arrival in the neighbourhood, by calling at the Vale. Sir James had assured him he could not gratify him more than by cultivating an intimacy there; and from what he already knew,

or at least suspected of Miss Erin's sentiments, and the light in which he was aware Donaghue was regarded, from being the son of her mother's dearest friend, he was not without hopes, that, by also inducing his doing the same, he might be the means of putting him in the way of fortune again. Still ignorant of what had actually occurred between him and Miss Erin, and equally so of the opinion which the artful misrepresentations of lady Jane had caused him to entertain of sir William, he knew of no other reluctance he could have to visiting there, than what originated in an unwillingness to expose himself to the farther attractions of a person whom his pride would no longer permit him to think of addressing, from no longer having the power of laying an adequate fortune at her feet, and which, as already stated, he determined on not resting till he had combated him out of, from deeming it extremely ridiculous. Had he known the truth, he perhaps might not have been able to exert himself so much on the sub-

ject; but though a hundred times it hovered on the lips of Donaghue, when assailed by his arguments or raillery, still, as often they closed without the power of revealing it, so overwhelmed was he with shame and confusion, whenever the idea of what his conduct had been to Miss Erin suggested itself to his tortured imagination.

In imagining that he himself should be the first to announce his arrival in the neighbourhood at the Vale, Melville was mistaken—Foley, after an absence of a few days, having called there just a short time before him, and mentioned it to Miss Erin, the only person who was in the way to receive him, and who, in consequence, was infinitely more pleased than surprised by seeing Melville in the course of the morning entering the drawing-room, where she was still sitting alone.—"My dear Mr. Melville," she cried, with one of her most enchanting smiles, rising to meet him, with an extended hand, "how very glad I am to see you, and——"

Here the unexpected vision of Donaghue behind him actually struck her dumb, for so entirely had she now relinquished all idea of ever seeing him as a visitor, that had she been ignorant of his being in the neighbourhood, she could hardly have been more surprised than she now was at beholding him; but not to surprise alone was owing her emotion at the instant—she had not seen him since the encounter in the abbey, and all that had occurred in that meeting now recurring to her recollection, she got confused, and almost without being conscious of what she was about, hastily rang the bell, and ordered a servant to let lady Jane know that Mr. O'Brien was there.

Melville stared.—"Lady Jane!" he repeated to himself; "and why to lady Jane send this intimation in preference to any other person? Surely I have not been in an error all this time, and fancied Donaghue pining away for one object, when actually he had made a transfer of his heart to another! Yet no, for what emo-

tion has he ever manifested at the mention of lady Jane, while the slightest allusion to Miss Erin is sure to throw him into an agitation; but then, if he has chosen to permit such a mistake to prevail, in order to free him from the suspicion of still harbouring a passion for Miss Erin, may not every hope or expectation relative to him be frustrated? Well, I shall certainly watch him closely, and if I find he has been guilty of such romantic folly, shall assuredly take him severely to task for it; for how ridiculous, because he has not a fortune equal to hers, to suppose he must be accused of interestedness for still thinking of the being I am convinced he alone admires!"

Lady Jane, who was loitering about her dressing-room, waited not a minute after receiving Miss Erin's message to hasten to the drawing-room.—"So, you two dear enchanting creatures," she cried, extending a hand to each of the gentlemen as she entered, "this is really quite an agreeable surprise."

" To me, at least," said Melville, laughing, " since, till this moment, I never had the presumption to think lady Jane thought me enchanting."

" Oh, pooh!" she cried; " don't you know one naturally considers every one so, that is elegant, and handsome, and agreeable?"

" What an intoxicating inference!" bowing, with a sigh of affected sensibility; " but really lady Jane flatters with such delicacy."

" Nonsense! if you felt my flattery, as you call it, you would not be able to speak of it in this manner, for its effect then would be too agitating for utterance."

" Then we may deem silence, in some cases, suspicious," said Melville; and involuntarily, as he spoke, he glanced at Donaghue, who had hitherto continued without speaking.

Donaghue coloured like scarlet at the look, and was involuntarily turning to a window, when suddenly recollecting how deeply he was interested in not letting

the mistake about lady Jane be detected, he checked himself, and replying to it by an affected laugh, followed her ladyship to the other end of the room.

Melville fancied he heard, at the instant, a soft sigh stealing from Miss Erin; if, however, there was any renewal of emotion at the moment, she had sufficient command over herself to conceal it; yet still, as her conversation with Melville was renewed, her eyes wandered, and once or twice, for an instant, so appeared to do her thoughts.

Sir William and lady Erin were both out, but now shortly expected back—one taking his usual morning's ride, the other paying some visits, from which her daughter had got herself excused. Her ladyship was the first who returned; on hearing who were in the drawing-room, she hastened thither, and was most deeply affected by the sight of Donaghue. After expressing her delight at seeing him—"And yet this exquisite pleasure to deny me so long!" she said. "Good Heavens!

when I think of our having been so long in the same neighbourhood, as we have now been, without before meeting, I almost feel the circumstance as a reproach to myself."

"No, no, my dearest madam," exclaimed Donaghue, eagerly, "you are not to blame for it; you——"

"Then why," said lady Erin, interrupting him, "be guilty of the unkindness you were, in denying me this pleasure?"

Donaghue blushed, hesitated, and while vainly considering what excuse to make, sir William Erin, to his great relief, made his appearance; he seemed much pleased at seeing the two friends, and gave them an invitation to stop the day, which was accepted.

Hardly had they consented to stay, ere Rosebud, who had set out on a scampering ride, as they were quitting Altoir-na-Grenie, and had promised to join them at the Vale, for the purpose of returning with them to the castle, was announced, and evinced no little pleasure at finding

they were all to remain where they were. Other visitors dropped in, and the different guests belonging to the house, and the conversation became general. But in this Donaghue was not allowed to bear any particular share, through the contrivance of lady Jane: she saw they were closely watched, and aware of the suspicion that occasioned their being so, determined to do all in her power to confirm it; accordingly, making a pretext to get him to occupy a seat beside her, she did every thing she could to engross his attention to herself, giving to her conversation with him, though, in reality, about nothing of any consequence, every appearance of its being so, from the manner in which she carried it on with him.

Donaghue could not be insensible to the belief of what all this was calculated to create, and to the conviction of it was owing his not making any effort to disengage himself from her; so anxious was he to be exonerated, in the eyes of sir William, of the suspicions he was led, by

her artifices, to imagine he entertained of his harbouring interested designs on his daughter, and so aware was he, of course, that nothing could so fully clear him of this, as allowing it to be supposed he had an attachment to another.

Artifice or deception of any kind was certainly hateful to him; but so revolting was the suspicion just alluded to, that he preferred almost any thing to passively remaining under it. Yet, when his thoughts glanced at what he had, from recent circumstances, reason to imagine the sentiments of Eveleen herself, how difficult did he find dissimulation in this instance! but surely, if possessed of real generosity, the very knowledge of these sentiments should only operate as an additional stimulus to it, since what but misery must result from their being confirmed? persuaded as he was, from lady Jane's artful representations of her father, that, to hope for his consenting to his daughter's union with any man of unequal fortune, was to hope for what was utterly impossible.

Both interested in observing him, sir William and lady Erin, without being perhaps exactly conscious of it themselves, seemed to make him the object of their particular scrutiny. It was not lost, however, upon Donaghue, and imputing the manner in which they regarded him entirely to anxiety to ascertain whether the suspicion they had entertained of him was groundless, he became, apparently, every moment more engaged with lady Jane.

Lady Erin began to think she had been wrong in denying her belief till now, notwithstanding the grounds there were for it, to his feeling a preference for her ladyship; and yet, though she almost thought so, she knew not how it was, she could not bring herself, even now, to resign herself implicitly to one of the kind. She watched Donaghue narrowly, and spite of the particularity that seemed to subsist between him and lady Jane, there was a something in his look, in his manner, at moments, that precluded the belief it was calculated to inspire. Yet it

might only be because she did not like to give way to it that she thought so. She had so long cherished a hope and wish of seeing a union effected between him and her daughter, that she knew not how to bring herself to entirely resign them. But the pain she was aware would attend their resignation must not prevent this, if she had any reason to apprehend her trying to avoid it was only trying to avoid a pain that must yet be experienced; but she should soon, she was convinced, be out of suspense on the subject; and the conviction that nothing would so soon put an end to this as obtaining opportunities for judging for herself, had certainly tended to heighten her anxiety for seeing Donaghue at the Vale.

In the course of conversation, some of those places which Donaghue had seen abroad were mentioned; and lady Erin, opening a portfolio that was lying on the table before her, called to him to come and look at some sketches of them which Miss

Erin had made, they, it seems, having been included in the tour which she had made on the Continent with her parents. They were exquisitely done; and had Donaghue given utterance to the admiration they excited, his language would have been glowing indeed; but a dread of now giving utterance to what she in any way inspired, lest of confirming the suspicions he imputed to sir William, made him now constrain himself, and regard them with the sober calmness of a person by no means interested about them.

Finding him silent, lady Erin uplifted her eyes to his, and a shade of vexation certainly overspread her countenance at his manner at the moment

"They are pretty," said lady Jane, "are they not?" following him to the table, and looking over his shoulder at them; "but don't, don't, I desire you," she cried, "look at that," attempting, as she spoke, to put her hand over one that had fallen out from amidst them.

"And why not?" said Donaghue, taking it up.

"Why, because—because it is one of my doing."

"Yours!" repeated Donaghue, in utter amazement at her having thrust such a hideous daub amongst things so exquisitely finished; and through absolute surprise he continued gazing at it with an earnestness so different from the forced coldness with which he had regarded the other drawings, as to make Miss Erin, who had also come to the table, involuntarily close the book, on lady Erin's attempting to produce more of them, with a conviction that, after this, there could not possibly be any farther proof wanted of what the real nature of his sentiments for lady Jane were.

Donaghue felt to his heart the inference that must be drawn from his conduct, and, hardly conscious of what he was about, hastily turned away to hide the emotion excited by the thought.

Lady Erin now began to resign her doubts; and even sir William, without having been previously apprized of any thing concerning lady Jane, was inclined to think, from what he now witnessed, that he need never have suspected Donaghue of haunting the shades of Ashley Vale on account of his daughter.

Melville, however, was not deceived; he knew more of the heart, he better understood the feelings of his friend, than they did; he had had opportunities of making observations which they had not; and the result of all was, even of what he now witnessed, those variations of countenance, those wandering looks, and momentary abstractions, that Donaghue could not help, a conviction that he was now acting a part, and from a too sensitive pride, voluntarily leading those astray, with regard to his sentiments, who were really interested in their developement.

He was incensed at the thought; in proportion to his solicitude for his happiness, was his exasperation at conduct so

calculated to destroy all chance of it; for he was well aware of what he would suffer, if he saw Miss Erin another's, and yet was he not now doing every thing in his power to deprive himself of her? for with all their liberality of sentiment (and from the knowledge he had, through a variety of circumstances, obtained of them, he gave them credit for as much as is perhaps generally possessed by most people), it was not to be supposed, if once induced to believe him indifferent about her, that sir William or lady Erin would think of wooing him for their daughter, or that she herself, persuaded of the same, would not quickly set about conquering any preference entertained for him; and in her effort to do which, aided as it would be by pride, by female delicacy, the attentions of others, and the ardent anxiety of her parents to see her happily established in life, there could be but little doubt of her shortly succeeding, leaving Donaghue, too late, to bewail those chi-

merical notions to which he had sacrificed her.

A short time before dinner, and just as the party, after a scattered ramble in the grounds, were collected again in the drawing-room, previous to it, lord Altidore was announced, and having paid his compliments to lady Erin, and the company in general, he took a seat by Miss Erin, and seemed immediately to devote himself entirely to her.

The young lady received him with smiles; and, to judge from appearances, a very interesting conversation took place between them; and had Melville been till then in doubt as to the nature of Donaghue's sentiments for Miss Erin, he could have been so no longer, from the agitation he now betrayed. There was indeed sufficient in her manner now to alarm an apprehensive lover—not, however, through any coquetry—not that she was perhaps altogether sorry that Donaghue was observing her, but through the positive in-

terest she took in the subject on which she was conversing with lord Altidore.

One day that she and lady Erin, with a party from the Vale, had been to his lordship's, as he was shewing them the improvements, a poor woman was found in an almost dying state, through downright poverty, near the house; and, in consequence of her being found on his grounds, his lordship, insisting on doing whatever was requisite for her, had made his wishing to consult Miss Erin on the subject of the best plan to be pursued for her future comfort, a pretext for occasionally seeking to withdraw her attention from others.

"Yet how weak," cried Donaghue, striving to struggle with the agony of soul he experienced, at the apparent encouragement given by Miss Erin to lord Altidore, "to feel what I am now enduring, since the pain of seeing her devoted to another is a pain I must have looked forward to experience, from the moment I saw the insuperable barriers placed by for-

tune between us! and what I anticipated, I should certainly have been better prepared to support; but I now perceive that there is a wide difference between the fortitude requisite to contemplate an affliction, and the fortitude required to bear it." Yet to think that but for himself, perhaps, it was an anguish that might have been spared him! But then how was it to be avoided? how but by probably endangering the tranquillity of Eveleen herself, and subjecting himself to the imputation of the most degrading selfishness? and rather than this—rather than allow the cold and wary sir William, as he still persevered in believing him, imagine he had not been too cold or cautious in his conduct towards him, what was there he felt he would not prefer suffering? In short, cost him what it would, he decided on persevering in his present conduct.

Sir William, who had not been of the walking-party, did not make his reappearance in the drawing-room till just a few minutes before the announcement of din-

ner. Looking anxiously about him as he entered it—"Our little Hebe not come yet?" he said.

"Nor shall we have the pleasure of seeing her this day, sir," said Miss Erin; "I have just received a note from her, begging to be excused, on account of the indisposition of her friend."

"Well, though I admire her for not coming, I still feel her not doing so a disappointment. However, I hope we shall not be much longer denied the gratification of seeing her here."

"Hebe!" repeated lady Jane, a little sneeringly; "and pray, my dear sir William, who may the young lady be, to whom you have given this appellation?"

"Oh! a sweet little creature, I assure you."

"Oh, that we must infer, from the name you have given her. But I presume she is known by some other? Does she belong to this quarter of the world?"

"Not exactly; she is a young person

for whom a most particular friend of mine is deeply interested, insomuch as to have requested lady Erin's immediate introduction for her into life, and on whose account we shall make it a point of rendering her every attention in our power."

"And in obliging him, we shall certainly oblige ourselves," said lady Erin; "for I never saw a young creature more calculated to win esteem and affection; she is at once so innocent, yet intelligent; so artless, yet polished; so much the child of nature, yet the accomplished girl."

"Quite a *rara avis*, upon my word!" said lady Jane, with something of a shrug. "Really, lady Erin, you and sir William have quite excited one's curiosity. Pray when may we expect to behold your paragon?"

"Very soon, I hope."

"And till then are we to know nothing more of her?"

"Nothing more."

"Upon my word, this is adding something of mysterious importance to her!

However, I am not one of those who should feel any ardent curiosity or impatience about her; on the contrary, we *belles* should rather dread such a blazing star coming amongst us, lest of a total eclipse; but the beaus indeed—I should not wonder if they assailed your ladyship."

"Then I give them due notice not to waste their eloquence on me," said lady Erin, smiling, "since I am determined that, in the present instance, neither flattery or coaxing shall prevail; our little Hebe must not be known till she is introduced here."

From this day Donaghue became, with his friend Melville, a constant participator in the gaieties and pleasures of the Vale; but he took not with him that lightness of spirit that was requisite for their enjoyment. Every day, every hour, rendered still more painful the struggle he was enduring, as every day, every hour, some new cause for esteem and admiration was discovered in her whom he adored; but the more arduous it became, the more

his pride seemed stimulated to persevere in it. Could he give a greater proof of love, love indeed worthy of the name, than by concealing it from her whom it would injure? and was he not, by suffering what he did, vindicating himself from any injurious thought that might have been entertained of him? for must not sir William now be convinced, that if he had indeed suspected him of any sordid or unworthy designs, he had done him injustice? and in the exultation of the reflection, there was almost sufficient, at times, to console him for what he was enduring. In a word, he so steadily persevered in the course he had decided on pursuing, so carefully guarded against being betrayed into any thing that could lead to the detection of the mistake the artifices of lady Jane had occasioned, that every one soon became completely deceived with regard to his real sentiments, but lady Jane herself and Melville; for though he sought not for the furtherance of his own design, to avoid an appearance

of particularity to her, not a word, or a look ever passed that could possibly be interpreted by her into any indication of passion; while Melville, in that anguish he could not conceal from him, read the truth. But vain were his remonstrances, on what he styled the positive absurdity of his conduct; what love could not effect, raillery could not accomplish. The happiness which he could not aim at, without the sacrifice of pride, he resolutely determined on relinquishing.

It has already been explained, that it was not from not having been prepossessed by his appearance and manner that sir William Erin did not lay himself out more particularly, in the first instance, for an intimacy with him than he had done. An intimacy at length effected, it was not long ere it confirmed the prepossession previously excited, insomuch, that had sir William been called upon to give his sanction to his addresses to his daughter, there is very little reason to imagine he would have withheld it. That this, how-

ever, would ever be required from him, now appeared most unlikely, so much so, that he could not help imagining what he had heard of a mutual prepossession between the young people to be chimerical.

Without trying to ascertain whether he was better pleased to find it as it now seemed, or as had been represented, we shall merely say, that conceiving there was now nothing to hinder the addresses of another suitor, he decided on seriously speaking to his daughter on the subject of lord Altidore, of whose ardent wish to be permitted to pay them he was not ignorant, and who, by this time, he knew sufficiently to deem deserving of her.

Lady Erin felt an equal degree of esteem for his lordship; but still she had so long cherished the idea of another union for her daughter, that it was not without a feeling of secret reluctance she could relinquish it, more especially deepened and confirmed as was the interest previously experienced for Donaghue, by the knowledge now acquired of him; but there

was a captivating sweetness in his manner, that, exclusive of every thing else, his high accomplishments, his mental and personal advantages, that was resistless in its endearing effect on the mind; but she tried to reconcile herself to the disappointment of her wish respecting him, by the reflection, that finite as our views are, we know not what will ultimately be most for our happiness or comfort; that, in short, we must not choose for ourselves; and it is well we must not, as we should very often make a bad choice; and since all thoughts of Donaghue's being connected with them by any other ties than those of friendship and esteem were now at an end, she knew no one, next to him, whom she felt more inclined to approve of for her daughter than lord Altidore.

Miss Erin, no more than her parents, was unjust to his merits; she saw what their wishes were, and she determined to make every exertion in her power to gratify them. Donaghue was now only thought of as a being devoted to another;

but still, till she was conscious of feeling a preferable regard for lord Altidore, she could not bring herself to do more than permit him to have the requisite opportunities for recommending himself to her esteem. She would have been shocked indeed, had she believed herself for a moment capable of the romantic folly of dwelling on the idea of a person now proved to be indifferent about her; and that she had cherished it so long, was, at times, a matter of surprise to her, till she reflected how much the interest excited by his change of fortune had contributed to keep it alive, and the early prepossession inspired for him by the representations of her mother; and in short, from the attentions she now forced herself to permit from lord Altidore, and the familiar terms on which he now appeared to be at the Vale, it was shortly the universal report and belief of the neighbourhood, that a marriage was in agitation between them.

What the feelings of Donaghue were at this juncture must be superfluous to say;

how alternately he condemned and applauded himself for the manner in which he had acted, now accusing himself of folly, then again conceiving, consistently with proper pride and generosity, he could not have acted otherwise than he did; suffice it, that whatever was his secret anguish, his mind was shortly, in some degree, diverted from it, by the curiosity and conjectures excited by some curious proceedings in the castle.

From an unquiet sleep, after a day of restless agitation at the Vale, Donaghue was suddenly awoke one night by a noise in his chamber; gently drawing back the curtain to see from what it proceeded, by the light of the candle which he had left burning, under the idea that if he could not compose himself to rest, he might like to rise and resume the book he had been reading, he perceived the figure of a man stealing on tiptoe towards the bed. With equal caution Donaghue raised himself immediately in it, desirous of ascertaining what his intentions were ere he seized

him. The intruder continued to advance, but not without looking behind him almost every instant as he did so, like a person in terror and alarm of being followed, and to this circumstance was alone owing Donaghue's not almost directly giving way to the persuasion of his being some one belonging to the castle trying to play him a trick, when he discovered that he was habited in the exact manner so often described as the costume of his ancestor, Mr. Dennis O'Brien, the supposed frequenter of it still, namely, in a yellow silk nightgown, red morocco slippers, and a crimson velvet cap. Seeing him within a few yards of the bed, Donaghue was on the point of springing from it, when the other suddenly paused, stood listening for a moment with seeming anxiety, and then hastily turning to the closet, vanished into it from his view.

Darting from the bed, Donaghue proceeded to search it, persuaded he should find him concealed here; but he was mistaken; and how he had effected his escape

was to him a matter of extreme perplexity, since through the closet it had assuredly been effected, and yet here was no door but the one into the bedchamber, neither window that was not firmly secured at the moment. Whilst musing on the circumstance, and regretting his having delayed to seize him, he heard the corporal's voice demanding admission; not a little surprised at this demand at such an hour, he was turning to open the door, when suddenly recollecting the disturbance that might be occasioned in the castle by his at present letting the one he had met with be known, he thought the wisest plan would be for him to return to bed, ere he raised the night-bolt. As he did so—"In the name of wonder, corporal," he demanded, "what has brought you here at so extraordinary an hour as this?"

"Brought me here!" as if involuntarily, repeated Cormick; "why sure, an' please your honour, your honour's bell."

"My bell! nonsense—are you mad, or dreaming?"

"Neither, plase your honour, at present; though, to be sure, I couldn't say so much a few minutes ago, for I was dreaming fast enough when your honour's bell woke me."

"My bell again!" said Donaghue; "why I tell you I did not ring for you."

"Not ring for me! The holy saints protect us, but if I could not swear I heard your honour's bell just as plain as I now hear myself speaking; and what is more remarkable, till I heard it a second time ringing quite a peal, as one may say, I thought it must be a fancy my thinking myself woke by it, owing to being dreaming at the moment that your honour was calling to me in a great hurry to come dig with you for the money that the old gentleman had been to tell you about, and who (the lord save and defend us!) is, I believe, beginning to trouble the castle again; for if your honour did not ring the bell I heard, as to be sure I know now you did not, who or what else but a ghost could have rung it?"

"What old gentleman do you mean? or what are you raving about?" cried Donaghue, pretending not to know, though perfectly aware, in order to have a pretext for asking questions he might not otherwise have thought of, his curiosity being somewhat raised by what had just occurred in his own chamber, and drawing aside the curtains as he spoke.

"Why sure your honour must know."

"Do not be sure; your meaning may not be as plain to others as to yourself."

"Why, any how, it can't be now, sure, that your honour has to hear the story of your great-uncle or grandfather, squire Dennis O'Brien, he whose picture hangs in the library, in the fine yellow silk night-gown, covered all over with roses, and with a velvet cap on his head, and red slippers on his feet, and who, to be sure, as your honour must have heard, will never rest till he has discovered to some one belonging to him the great pot of money he hid in the time of the troubles, somewhere in the castle!"

"If you verily believe in this story," said Donaghue, not however without thinking there was something like a curious coincidence in its introduction at this moment, after what he had just seen, "I wonder, Cormick, you do not try to profit by it, by making a search after this hid treasure yourself."

"Me, your honour! Ah then, it's a good chance I'd have of finding it to be sure. No, no, your honour, 'tis your own self that will be yet getting it—as, to be sure, who has so good a right, being the nearest now living to squire Dennis, and who, 'tis well known, never yet appeared to any about it that did not belong to himself, nor what was more, didn't stand in want of it just at the time? 'Tis many a long year now since he was seen in the castle, and the last time he was, it's said it was in this very chamber, the tapestry chamber, by a young gentleman of the family that was crossed in love for the want of a fortune, and who might have got all squire Dennis's money, but that

he wouldn't follow him, as he wanted, to the place where it was hid; my mother has the whole story, and——But, holy St. Patrick! what was that? didn't I hear a noise? wasn't that very like the rustling of a silk?—speak of——"

"That is a very irreverent quotation, corporal," interrupted Donaghue, when speaking of so good-natured a personage as you have described my kinsman squire Dennis; but come," jumping out of bed, for he also imagined he heard a sound at the instant in the closet, "since your dreams or fancies have brought you here, be so good as to assist me in searching whether any cat has got in here, for I rather thought I heard a noise in it," leading the way to the closet as he spoke; but again it was examined to no purpose, Donaghue conceiving that there might be some means of evasion there, that, at the first glance, had escaped him, but nothing of the kind could be detected; that, however, there was some way of escape from it he could not possibly doubt, after what

he had seen; and whoever had attempted to play this trick upon his credulity had certainly, he conceived, managed the matter extremely well, for that what had happened was a mere contrivance for amusement, he, of course, was by this time convinced; the dress of the figure did not permit a doubt on the subject, and his suspicions fell upon Rosebud, knowing the delight he would take in any thing of the kind. Lest, however, he should not like to confess the truth at first, he thought it better, for the present, to be silent on the subject, and accordingly dismissed the corporal, without permitting him to suspect any thing had happened to disturb him, perfectly easy now with regard to it, from the supposition he had given way to concerning it.

But though he could hardly think that Melville would join Rosebud in any thing so boyish as the trick of the preceding night, this did not prevent his watching his looks as closely the next morning at breakfast as he did the doctor's, persuaded,

if guilty, they would betray him on meeting his scrutiny—that he was not, he was soon convinced, and indeed there was as little reason, from his looks, to persevere in suspecting the doctor; suspect him, however, he still did, and accordingly decided on not resting till he had led him to betray himself.

In pursuance of this determination, breakfast was hardly over, ere he got him to the library, where, after engaging him for some time in chatting on various matters, he suddenly paused in something he was saying, to ask him whether he did not think that picture, glancing as he spoke at the gentleman's in the yellow nightgown, a well executed one?

"I protest I don't know," said Rosebud, advancing towards it as he replied; "for I don't know that I ever before noticed it particularly."

"Not that picture!" said Donaghue, with something of emphasis.

"No; is there any thing particular about it?"

"Well, really you surprise me by what you say; I should have conceived, from the story here on record about the person it was done for, that it would have engaged your particular attention."

"Story! what story, my dear fellow?" with the greatest eagerness; "any thing very wonderful?"

"And now really have you never heard any thing of it?"

"Really never."

"May I positively believe you serious in saying so?"

"Positively; on the word and honour of a gentleman, and a regimental surgeon, you may. So come, if 'tis any thing very strange, wild, or wonderful, do let me have it; for I have quite as greedy an ear for tales of this description as any old gossip or pretty little dairymaid whatever."

"You must excuse me, my dear doctor, I am a very bad detailer of the marvellous; but you have only to make love to nurse here, to get it from her, if you really wish for it."

"Wish for it!" and he protested nothing but having a long letter to write that morning would have prevented his immediately seeking her for the purpose.

Donaghue knew not now what to think; if he acquitted the doctor of what he had suspected, he was utterly at a loss whom to suspect in his place; and yet how, after what had just passed, his declared ignorance of the story, to which was imputed all that had occurred last night, could he persist in imagining him the contriver of it? But he might not conceive there was any thing very reprehensible in the denial of such a matter; and in short, from this idea, and his well known propensity to things of the kind, Donaghue could not bring himself to believe he was not; and what tended not a little to confirm him in the persuasion that he was, was the recollection of the artifice which the figure had had recourse to, by still keeping the head turned away, as if fearful of being followed, to prevent his seeing the

countenance. The only thing that puzzled him was, how he had obtained a knowledge of the secret inlet into the chamber; for that such a one existed was now clear, since, if even acquainted with it, he could not for a moment imagine any of the inmates of the castle would have ventured to aid him in playing the trick, by disclosing it to him; that he had, however, by some means or other learned it, was not to be doubted; and Donaghue now set himself more diligently than ever to work to find it out, in order to prevent any further interruption to his rest from him; but in vain he sought, and indirectly inquired about it—neither old Cormick or his wife could give him the slightest idea of it.

Melville had gone out, the doctor was still busied in writing, and Donaghue, in a very listless humour, at length strolled from the castle by himself. Unconsciously almost he took the direction leading to the abbey, and ere he was well aware of it, found himself there.

The day was sultry, and it was now the hottest hour, when, vertical, the sun pours down his fiercest influence, and gladly

> " Dew-dropping coolness to the shade retires,
> There on the verdant turf, or flowery glade,
> By gelid fount, and ceaseless rills to muse."

And all around there was a kind of languid stillness in the place, that was not without its effect upon him. He advanced within the walls, and with loitering steps was making his way through the chapel, to another staircase he had discovered, leading to the chamber he had been in the habit of frequenting above, when the sound of music made him suddenly check himself, and the next instant retreat, under the idea of its being lady Jane he had heard—that unprincipled woman, to whose artifices he could hardly avoid believing his present misery imputable, since, but for her, he conceived he should never have thought of the deception he had practised—a deception that, spite of the command he struggled to maintain over

himself, his romantic notions of generosity he could not help at times repenting, at least whenever the maddening idea of seeing Eveleen another's occurred to his imagination.

Anxious at all times to avoid her ladyship, but more especially when in a humour to contemplate her with bitterness, he was flying from the place, when the voice of Millicent Erin, asking him, with a laugh, as she thrust her head through one of the narrow arches of the cloisters above, whether they had frightened him, arrested his steps.

"Frightened me!" repeated Donaghue. "Why, who is with you?"

"Not lady Jane," said Miss Erin, laughing, as, to his utter surprise, she also now came forward; "and is it not a convincing proof that you knew it was not her delightful strains you heard, your attempting to make so precipitate a retreat? But come, don't look so embarrassed; as you could not guess who else it was, I shall not consider your doing so as any

positively intended affront to me. But my mother is here, and if you come up, you shall see what a delightful retreat we have fitted up here."

Donaghue was in a moment with her in the gallery, and through various passages she led the way to the apartment which he himself had frequented, and which by this time was tastefully furnished with whatever was requisite for the accommodation of those who might like to amuse themselves with reading, drawing, or music, in it.

"Well," said Miss Erin, advancing into it, while Millicent, missing her aunt, darted away to look for her, "what do you think of this now? Do you not think it well adapted to the purposes to which it seems devoted? But you should, and I know you will admire it, when I tell you, that the idea of it was suggested by lady Jane."

"By lady Jane!" repeated Donaghue, with something of indignant contempt, hurried out of himself by the feelings ex-

cited by this intimated belief of an attachment to her; "and do you think that that is a circumstance to make me admire it? Oh, no, no!" he passionately exclaimed, pacing the room with an agitation of which he was perhaps not conscious, as he spoke—"oh, no, no! 'tis not lady Jane's idea that would give it any charm in my eyes; but hers who gives interest to whatever it is connected with."

Miss Erin looked at him with astonishment; after all that had passed, the long continued constraint of his manner towards her, to hear such a burst of passion——But she suddenly recollected, that for the few last days there had appeared a coolness between him and her ladyship; and it instantly struck her that to this was owing what had now occurred. Finding him still insensible to her advances, lady Jane, like a true coquette, suddenly thought what piquing his pride might effect, and accordingly renewed her suspended flirtation with Mr. Lawless, a ri-

val sufficiently formidable to alarm the jealousy of any admirer she conceived; and to this, the resentment inspired by the circumstance, and a wish of rendering her instrumental to revenging it, Miss Erin was now led to ascribe what had escaped him; and, in indignation at the thought, her cheek flushed to the deepest crimson, as with a look of scorn she turned away her head from him.

Her look recalled Donaghue to recollection and indescribable confusion, at the idea of what he had been betrayed into; he stood gazing at her, utterly at a loss how to act, whether at once to throw himself upon her mercy, and confess the truth, or remain under the injurious opinion he saw she had conceived of him.

Whilst undecided, lady Erin entered from an adjoining gallery, and Donaghue, starting from his fixed attitude, hastened to meet her; but the hand that used to be extended on seeing him was now held back; and bowing to him, with an air of

the coldest gravity, she passed him to a seat.

A bolt of ice transfixing his heart could not have given acuter pain to Donaghue, than was experienced by him at this moment. Stung to the very soul by her ladyship's altered manner, he hastily turned away, and retreating to a window, leaned against it for a few minutes, with feelings nearly overwhelming. And was she too offended, his amiable, his maternal friend, whom he had so many reasons for regarding? But to displease one, was, of course, to displease both; and he saw he had had the misfortune to do so. Lady Erin had even heard, it was evident, what, in the agitation of a moment, had escaped him, and interpreting it in the same way her daughter had done, was equally offended by it; and this was the effect of the deception he had allowed himself to practise—for surely it was a deception, to remain passive under the mistake which the artifices of lady Jane had laid the foundation of, with regard to his senti-

ments; for would it not have been ten thousand times better for him to have left the neighbourhood at once, since his notions of pride and generosity would not permit him any longer to think of Miss Erin, than, for the mere sake of being where she was, weakly run the risk of being betrayed into the semblance of acting a double part? But it was now too late to repent all this; all that now remained for consideration was, whether or not he should immediately fly the place.

While these bitter reflections were passing through his mind, Miss Erin, losing in the pity excited by the confusion into which her mother's manner had thrown him the anger he had caused, cast an imploring look at her ladyship, and perhaps also of a little relenting at her own side, at length made an effort to enter into conversation with him; but Donaghue was hardly able to profit by her condescension, so embarrassed and agitated did he remain from what had occurred; till at last, some wandering glances caught from

Eveleen began a little to recompose him, from the hope they inspired, if he had offended, of not having done so irreparably; or rather, perhaps, of her having at length begun to surmise the truth; but their effect upon him was but transient.

Commenting upon some remarks lady Erin had made on the prospect the apartment commanded—" But I think," she said, " in this scenery nothing is so beautiful as the fine opening in those woods yonder, that admits a view of the ancient mansion of lord Altidore on its elevation of green downs. Really, for the sake of seeing that alone, I should think this chamber delightful."

Donaghue felt almost as if a viper had bitten him at the instant, so acute was the sensation excited by these words. He had begun, almost unconsciously perhaps, to give way to an idea—for what are not the romantic fancies to which an ardent imagination leads!—that perhaps to some thought connected with him might have been owing Miss Erin's positive choice

of this apartment for a temporary retreat, as he understood from lady Erin was the case, in preference to several others that were pointed out as equally desirable for the purpose; but after this declaration, a declaration that seemed made for the purpose of indirectly rebuking the vanity that led to the suggestion, he could no longer think so; she had given him clearly to understand, from what she said, that she had chosen it from no motive that could possibly flatter him; but quite the reverse indeed—for the sake of one particular view, and that of the mansion of his rival. Ay, that was the offence, and he felt it as such; for trifles light as air are indeed matters of moment to the enamoured; his cheek grew red—his eyes sparkled with resentful feelings—his whole form seemed to dilate itself with offended pride—and rising from the window-seat on which he had languidly thrown himself, after loitering for a few minutes about the room, pretending to look at some prints that embellished it, with an air that might

have proved, to any one interested in it, he had not altogether forgotten the fashionable *nonchalance* of former times, he suddenly murmured something of having recollected an engagement elsewhere, and took a precipitate leave of the ladies.

CHAPTER VII.

"'Tis now the very witching hour of night,
When churchyards yawn, and graves give up their dead."

We shall not follow Donaghue particularly through the remainder of the day—suffice it, after being dragged by Rosebud to a dinner-party at sir Ulick Magennis's, where, however, to his great relief, he did not meet the family from the Vale, he was, at twelve o'clock, in his chamber reading, determined against going to bed for some time, lest of any attempt being made to disturb him again this night.

From time to time his looks were turned towards the closet, the door of which he had purposely left open, that he might be ready, on the slightest indication of any one's being there, to seize upon the intruder; and he could hardly suppress a smile at times, at the idea of the absolute anger he was convinced the doctor would feel at being so immediately detected.

One—two, however struck, and nothing was heard to disturb him; no sound indeed, save now and then the low moaning of the wind outside the casements, or the rustling of the long streaming grass and weeds that begirt them; and at length, giving up all idea of seeing either a real or fictitious ghost that night, he thought he might as well go to bed, as he was getting sleepy; and to bed accordingly he went, taking the precaution, however, of first locking the closet, so that, if he received a visitation this night, as the chamber-door was also secured, he really felt he should consider it rather an extraordinary circumstance.

His head had not been long on the pillow, ere, spite of all the pangs and pains of the day, he fell fast asleep, probably exhausted by them; but had not very long enjoyed this sweet oblivion of human care, when he was roused from it by the drawing back of his curtains, and starting up in the bed, he beheld the same figure as on the preceding night retreating from it towards the closet; and as it did so, beckoning to him to follow.

"Well, really," cried Donaghue, "this is marvellous! Now do, my dear doctor," he added, fully impressed with the idea of its being him he saw, "do let me know how you got access to my chamber, or I shall really have you taken up for a magician. Consider how much it behoves me to know all the secret inlets and outlets of this old fabric of mine!" No reply. "Then really, my dear friend, you must excuse my intercepting your retreat," and as he spoke he sprung from the bed; but ere he reached the figure it had disappeared; and, to his utter sur-

prise, he found the closet open, since from this it seemed as if it was by the chamber the intruder had entered, and yet the door of this still remained fastened.

Donaghue stood for a moment lost in perplexity; then conceiving, if it was indeed the doctor, he should, by hastening directly to his chamber, be enabled to detect him in his return to it, and thus prevent the repetition of what was really very teazing, he threw on his nightgown, and without another moment's delay, proceeded to it. The door was unbolted; he softly opened it, and was speedily convinced, from the heavy breathing he heard, that whoever it was he had seen, it was not Rosebud, knowing it was utterly impossible for him to have got to his room before him.

More at a loss now than ever to account for what had occurred, since, from being now compelled to acquit the doctor of any concern in it, he knew no longer how to impute it to any idle contrivance for amusement; and yet, if any thing serious

was intended by it, surely he would not each time have been put on his guard, by being roused from his sleep. The manner in which he had been disturbed on a former occasion, by the violent shaking of his bed, when he had every reason to imagine there was some one in the room, now recurring to his recollection, he slowly turned away, and retraced his way to his chamber, half inclined to call Cormick, and yet still unwilling, from a fear of creating any superstitious terror in the castle.

By the time he reentered his chamber, the candle, by the fitful light of which he had been able to perceive the motions of his visitant, was out; but there was a bright moon by this time shining in the heavens, and he drew aside a window-curtain to admit her light. Hardly had he done so, when a rustling sound behind him made him turn with quickness, and he again beheld the figure stationary at the closet. He was instantly darting forward, when suddenly recollecting the manner in which it seemed enabled to evade

his grasp, he checked himself, to demand who it was, or what it required of him.

No other reply was made, than a motion to follow into the closet, to which it made a movement at the moment.

"Follow!" cried Donaghue, indignantly. "No, assuredly. Have done, therefore, with this idle mummery, which, let it be intended for what it may, will not in any way succeed, and may be the means of involving you in greater trouble than what you may be aware of. Confess at once your motive for coming here, if you wish to escape the consequences of that detection I am resolved on."

Still, however, as if utterly regardless of this threat, the figure continued to beckon him to advance, keeping gently receding all the time into the closet.

Donaghue kept his eye steadily fixed on it for a moment, and then making one dart forward, was sure of having secured it; but at the very instant it seemed within his grasp, it was gone.

To think of any further repose that night

was, after such an incident as this, out of the question. His perplexity at it was heightened by not knowing how to mention it to any one, lest it should be the means of inquiries and conjectures that might be troublesome. His threat might, he reflected, prove availing; and till he had ascertained whether it had or not, he finally decided on being silent on the subject.

The recurrence of a few nights without any thing farther to disturb him, induced a persuasion that it had, and equally tended to confirm him in the one of what had happened being the mere idle contrivance of some one for amusement; but who that some one was remained still to be discovered, as also the secret means of access to his chamber, the knowledge of which occasioned him, from this time, to take the precaution of having firearms laid every night by his bedside; and he would probably indeed have abandoned the apartment altogether, but that from what he had ascertained, he conceived it requisite, for the safety of the castle, that some one

should remain in it. More than once the story connected with it, as related in the old papers he had by such chance discovered, now recurred to his recollection; and altogether, he made not the slightest doubt, that if the present had been days of superstition, the coincidence between this and what had lately occurred would not have been without its due effect on his imagination.

But all this time he was not unmindful of Melville. There was something, he thought, strange and unusual in his manner—an abstraction and restlessness he had never before noticed, united to which he was continually missing him, without ever learning where he had been, and altogether, from these circumstances, and the confusion he had betrayed about the hurt in his hand, he could hardly help suspecting, spite of the high opinion he entertained of his prudence and principles, that he was engaged in some adventure or other, and not unfrequently rallied him on the subject.

Melville merely laughed in return; undecided still how matters might end between him and his pretty Lavinia, he determined, for the present at least, to remain silent on the subject of the passion she had inspired. Every day, however, tended still more strongly to persuade him that they would yet have a very serious conclusion; for every day seemed to rivet still more firmly the chains she had wound round his heart. To be loved for himself alone! there was really something seducing in the idea; and Melville knew hardly any thing that could tempt him to give up a conquest of which he had such reason to be vain.

For his wish of seeing her, the indisposition of her poor friend Rosetta proved propitious, by delaying that introduction that would have prevented her having so much the command of her actions as at present; for though she could not possibly think of exchanging the sick chamber of the invalid, the only confidant as she was of that secret anguish that was undermining

her health, and like a worm in the bud, indeed, feasting on her damask cheek, for scenes of gaiety that would keep her whole hours away from her, yet there was no reason why she should not just now and then leave it, for the purpose of relieving the languor it sometimes occasioned, by breathing the pure air; and somehow, it so happened, that wherever she turned her steps for this purpose, she almost always found Mr. Dennis Scanlen inhaling it in the same direction, and so, by this means, very unintentionally to be sure, their acquaintance was kept up. But it would soon be at an end, for it was not to be supposed that he would continue much longer loitering in the neighbourhood; and when once introduced at the Vale, she had reason to believe she should not be allowed to pass much of her time at Rosehill. At the idea of the gaiety, and splendour, and admiration to which this introduction made her look forward, it was impossible for her not to be delighted, since, whatever her romantic feel-

ings might be, neither her pride or ambition were at all subdued. Yet, notwithstanding, there was at times a heaviness on her heart she knew not how to shake off, and something like a wish to avoid what she yet loved to dwell on.

The preparations made for her being introduced into society were of the most expensive description, such as plainly evinced her being held in no little estimation by her unknown guardian; but though she was, of course, gratified by the advantages afforded her, yet, whilst she remained in ignorance of his motive for thus wishing to render her of consequence, she felt it impossible to be completely happy—the most fearful ideas from time to time haunting her imagination respecting him, deeming it, as she did, most unlikely that, if any tie but that of whim or caprice connected them, she would not before this have been acknowledged by him.

The mystery connected with her was imparted by sir William to lady Erin and

his daughter, on his mentioning her intended introduction to them; the person who requested their patronage for her knowing it could not, with propriety, be expected without their really knowing who she was. The interest excited by her story was not lessened by her appearance; and to induce them to render her every attention in their power, they felt nothing more was requisite than this.

Lady Erin wished to have brought her at once to the Vale; but though Lavinia was much pleased with these new friends her guardian had obtained her, still she shrunk from the thought of being thus abruptly torn, as it were, from her first and long-tried ones; and at her earnest request, her ladyship excused her then becoming her inmate, but insisted on the next day being spent with her.

The Wheatleys, with whom the family were greatly pleased, were pressed in the warmest manner to accompany her, but which Mr. Wheatley positively, though

gratefully, declined, having long ago, though he did not think proper to make the acknowledgment peremptorily, given up for himself and family all society but that in his own level line, conceiving that one cannot feel independent if they accept attentions they have not the power of returning.

How Lavinia's engagement came to be relinquished has already been explained. Rosetta's spirits were so much affected by the sight of Miss Erin, conjuring up as it did a number of painful ideas, that she grew ill ere she had well departed, and was unable, for some days after, to leave her chamber.

But much as the thoughts of Lavinia dwelt on the Vale, not once did a word relative to it escape her to Mr. Scanlen. She certainly did not wish him, by any means, to forget the difference between them; yet still, she knew not how it was, she did not like immediately to remind him herself of it. He must hear of her introduction at the Vale without her men-

tioning it to him, from the noise which her *début* in the fashionable circles of the place would no doubt make in it. Dear, how she should like to know what she was intended for! whether the wife of this hideous old guardian of hers, for she would have him so, or his heiress; and how provoking to think she must remain some time longer in suspense!—the hope which she had indulged of being able to learn something of him at the Vale being destroyed, by Mr. Wheatley's telling her she must not, on any account whatever, make the slightest allusion to him there.

The announcement of a subscription ball at ——, set her little heart in a flutter, and it was finally settled that her first appearance in public should be there.

Inexpressible was her delight on the occasion, aware, as she was, that all the fashion in the neighbourhood would be there—every young man of elegance and consequence belonging to it; lord Altidore—that, to be sure, was a prohibited

name at Rosehill; and the owner of that magnificent old castle she so much admired, and his friend, Mr. Melville, two of the handsomest, most captivating creatures, she was assured, by several young ladies belonging to the place, in the world; and certainly it would be pleasant to become acquainted with such; and in short, in spite of some obtruding thoughts, she actually became impatient for the evening.

The evening at length came; nothing that taste and elegance could do to set her off was omitted; and Rosetta, who assiduously attended at her toilet, thought it impossible she could be surpassed in the scene of gaiety to which she was going —an opinion in which we are inclined to think Lavinia herself did not very essentially differ from her.

Could Donaghue possibly have excused himself from making one of the brilliant assemblage, he certainly would have been happy, so much was he teazed and tormented about lady Jane.

Lady Erin, quickly getting the better of

the anger inspired by the incident in the abbey, set about remonstrating with lady Jane on the coquetry to which she imputed what had offended her there, his wishing to have it appear, out of jealous pique, that he had veered about in his addresses from her to her daughter.

Lady Jane was delighted at her remonstrance on the subject, from the confirmation it afforded of her giving credit to what she wished; she affected the prettiest air imaginable of innocence and regret on the occasion—protested she did not know that Donaghue had any right to be offended—but since her ladyship said she should be more particular in her conduct, why she would be so, more especially as she now saw what his temper was—so captious, so jealous; and in short, she had not the slightest objection to her interfering between them, artfully calculating on the possibility there was, by her doing so, of Donaghue's being betrayed into some acknowledgment from which he could not retract, or at least, which

was the same thing, being led by it to believe their attachment was too firmly credited for him to be able to deny it without injury to her honour.

Donaghue, however, with all his warmth of feeling and acute sensibility, was not so easily to be betrayed into any thing revolting to his feelings or principles as she hoped might be the case; and accordingly, on being forced again to the Vale, which, after what had occurred at the abbey, he absented himself a day or two from, on her ladyship taking him to task about the little *brouillerie*, as she called it, existing between him and lady Jane, and entreating him to think no more about it, as really her ladyship was quite penitent for any little cause of uneasiness or resentment she had given him, he positively protested against feeling any resentment against her, vehemently declaring that, as far as he himself was interested in it, it was not possible for her conduct, be it what it might, to give him any uneasiness or concern whatever. But

in vain he persisted in this declaration; lady Erin continued to smile incredulously; and his anger and vexation at her obstinate doubt of his veracity was augmented by Miss Erin's being present on the occasion.

"After what we have witnessed——" said lady Erin, at length.

"What we witness is not always to be depended on," said Donaghue, still more vehemently; "errors and mistakes are continually occurring in life, through too much dependance being placed on chance circumstances. My manner to lady Jane may sometimes have worn the semblance of particularity; but let it have deceived who it may, it could never possibly deceive her; for never did a profession escape my lips that could be construed into any thing like a hint of an attachment."

"Come, come," cried lady Erin, playfully putting her hand before his mouth, "I'll listen to no more of this, because I know, the moment your vow of allegiance

is renewed to your liege lady, you'll be repenting and wishing it all unsaid."

"My liege lady!" with a sigh from the very bottom of his heart, involuntarily repeated Donaghue, and a momentary glance at Eveleen, who all this time appeared to be so busily engaged with a drawing, as to be unconscious of the conversation that was going on. Then, with still greater earnestness—"Upon my honour," he exclaimed; "upon——"

"Stop!" said lady Erin, again interposing to prevent his utterance. "Though Jane laughs at lovers' perjuries, I cannot; this is positively carrying resentment too far; but lady Jane has explained all—your early attachment, and the unfortunate distrust of hers, the cause of all this proneness to jealousy, which her being compelled to yield obedience to the arbitrary will of a selfish father occasioned."

With all his vexation, Donaghue could not help laughing outright, at such a statement having been imposed upon her ladyship. That lady Jane could for a mo-

ment have thought of representing herself in the light it seemed she had done to her—as a poor timid, trembling, submissive daughter, really struck him as so ludicrous, that he could not immediately recover from his risibility.—" Well, really," he cried, " this is amusing!" But his tone had all the bitterness of sarcasm in it; and his laugh was evidently one more of ridicule than enjoyment. " The next thing lady Jane will do, I suppose, will be to entertain, I mean interest, your ladyship, by the account of the melancholy sentimental turn she has since acquired."

" Ay, there's the rub," cried her ladyship; " that's what offends—her not seeming to feel what happened more than she has done; but really 'tis but natural for a fine young woman like her."

Donaghue could not command himself any longer; he rose, impatiently, and taking up a new publication that was lying on a table, forced her ladyship to change the conversation, by beginning to speak

of it. Much, however, as this conversation had irritated him, yet, upon a little reflection, he was not sorry that it had occurred, from the opportunity it afforded him of explicitly declaring himself, with regard to lady Jane: at present he saw indeed this could be of no use, but the time might come when, being able to refer to it, might be a means of preventing an imputation on his honour. How he had run the risk of incurring this, which he was now sensible he had done, by the encouragement he had given to the continuance of the mistake the artful contrivances of lady Jane had led to, he was now astonished. In time, however, he trusted he had become sensible of the consequences likely to accrue from such conduct, with a conviction that it is vain to hope we can ever turn into the maze of dissimulation, without regret and repentance.

But though he now shunned every assiduity to her ladyship, avoided every attention that was not absolutely required by politeness, still lady Erin, through the

artifices of lady Jane, would not give up the persuasion that was so provoking to him, persisting in imputing this coolness and indifference towards her, entirely to the effect of jealous resentment at her flirtation with Mr. Lawless, and in consequence took every opportunity that occurred, for either remonstrating with him, or rallying him on the subject, fearful indeed, if he persevered much longer in such conduct, her ladyship, in some sudden pet, would veer about to some other admirer, and thus deprive him of the chance he now had of retrieving his fortunes by a union with her; and so convinced was Donaghue that she would go on the same way at the ball, no doubt from the best motive, but still that did not prevent its being very teazing to him, on finding he would not dance with lady Jane, that could he have declined going to it without disobliging Melville, he certainly would have done so.

But Mr. Sedley would not have been quite so anxious as he was to exhibit him-

self there, had he been aware of the surprise that there awaited him, in the person of Miss Lavinia. Having, as we have already hinted, out of regard to his supposed feelings as Dennis Scanlen, carefully avoided letting him know the introduction that was about taking place, no language can do justice to his gesture, to his astonishment, when, on his entering the ball-room, the first object he beheld was her, seated at the upper end of it with the Erin party, attired in all the elegance of fashion, glowing with resplendent beauty, and certainly neither, apparently, inattentive, nor yet undelighted with the general admiration it excited. Who could have thought of such thing? and was ever any thing so *mal à propos?* and what should he do? for not for the world would he have their acquaintance discovered here, or the imposition he had practised on her detected; and in short, he saw no other plan for him to pursue, by which to extricate himself from the dilemma in which he felt himself, than to disengage himself

from Donaghue, and as soon as he had done so, quit the place, leaving a message for him, that it was owing to sudden indisposition.

Accordingly, as Donaghue was making his way to join the party from the Vale, he drew away his arm from him, pretending he missed one of his gloves, and telling him not to stop for him, abruptly quitted him; but hardly had he done so, when, full plump, he encountered sir William Erin.—"Well met, my dear fellow," cried the baronet, catching him by the arm, and whirling him about as he spoke; "I have been on the look-out for you ever since I entered the room, to apprize you of an obligation you owe me."

"I really owe you so many, my dear sir, for your kind attentions to me since I came here," said Melville, but rather in a languid tone, hardly able to conceal his vexation at this encounter; the baronet keeping firm hold of him by the arm.

"Oh well, that is allowed," said sir William, "but you will acknowledge this sur-

passes them all, when you learn that it is, having secured for you the hand of the very prettiest creature in the room."

"That certainly is one that can never be sufficiently acknowledged," replied Melville, trying to force a smile, but in a tone expressive of any thing but satisfaction, since, certainly, if the baronet's taste and his did not differ essentially, the very prettiest creature in the room was exactly the very person he most wished at that moment to avoid.

"There! you may judge for yourself whether she is not," cried sir William, pointing out Lavinia to him, as, for a moment, they were impeded in their approach to her; "that is my little Hebe, and I certainly do think she merits the name."

Against what was to be, Melville saw it was useless to contend, and so suffered himself, without further resistance, to be led forward, hoping he should, by his looks, be able to render himself sufficiently intelligible to Lavinia to prevent those indications of surprise she must assuredly

feel at the discovery that was now about taking place.

What this surprise was may well be imagined; no language, indeed, could portray her astonishment at finding Mr. Denny Scanlen, whom her pride made her continually reproach herself for having, in the slightest degree, noticed, metamorphosed into the elegant, accomplished, fashionable Mr. Melville, the nephew and heir of sir James Melville, and whom all the dashing belles of the place were vying with each other to attract. That it must have led to what Melville wished to prevent, there could be no doubt, but that at the very moment sir William was presenting him to her, his attention was called away by a party that had come up to pay their compliments to lady and Miss Erin; and merely saying—"Miss Audley, this is the gentleman I wished to secure your hand for," he left them to themselves.

"I do not wonder," whispered Melville, insinuating himself into a seat beside her, "at your look of surprise, but suspend

your opinion of what appears extraordinary till I have a better opportunity of explaining the cause of it; as soon as we stand up to dance, I shall be more explicit."

"Stand up to dance!" and Lavinia indignantly pushed him back with her elbow; no, indeed, there was an end of any further dancing or communication with him. If she could think of any further acquaintance with him, after the imposition he had practised on her, she should conceive, to a certainty, that she was wilfully exposing herself to still further deception from him, such as she now believed him capable of; for to the most insidious motives she imputed that which had been discovered; there was no other way in which she could account for it, than by imputing it to some designs inimical to her peace and innocence; and her pride and purity equally alarmed by the idea, she determined to let him see she was neither directly or indirectly to be insulted with impunity.

"Do not frown so terribly," said Mel-

ville, "it will excite curiosity; have a little patience, and I shall be able to convince you, you have no reason to be angry or offended."

"If my credulity was equal to your confidence, I might give credit to the assertion," replied Lavinia; "but as that does not happen to be the case, I shall not certainly put you to the necessity of racking your invention: from this moment I must insist on it that you do not make any further attempt to intrude yourself on my notice; should you do so, I shall feel myself reduced to the disagreeable necessity of explaining what I deem so affronting, as to wish, from a feeling of pride, to have concealed; and as it is useless to expect my dancing with you, if you have any wish to dance, do not let yourself be detained here another minute."

She had all this time been speaking without looking at him; and at this instant, sir Edward Surrey, who had for some time been gazing at her, as if she was a kind of wonder, approached.—"I

presume, ma'am," he said, with what he certainly at least intended for one of his very best bows, "from seeing that gentleman," glancing at Melville, "beside you, it is useless to solicit the honour of your hand for the first set; but for the second ——"

"Oh, by no means, sir," said Lavinia; "it so happens that for every set that will be danced this night I believe I am engaged, but for the very first, and that I shall have very great pleasure in dancing with you;" immediately giving him her hand, and allowing him to lead her out to join the set that was now beginning to be formed.

Poor Miss Bond, who had completely calculated on having the baronet for a partner, and had, in consequence, refused an overture or two that was made for her hand, was utterly unable to conceal her vexation at the disappointment she met with; expanding her little fan, she protested, as she used it with some violence, it was very extraordinary, indeed, that

Miss Audley had not given sir Edward time to explain that it was not for the first set he wanted to engage her.

"Well, no matter," said Melville, who, with all his vexation, and vexed he certainly was very much at what had happened, from not knowing whether he really should be able to vindicate himself in the opinion of Lavinia, of what it was evident to him she accused him of, was hardly able to refrain from laughing at the disconsolation she betrayed, "let me profit by the circumstance, by having your hand for this set."

In a moment it was granted. Hardly had they taken their places in the set, which Melville contrived should be next to Lavinia, ere sir William joined them. —"Well, Miss Audley," he began—but whatever he was about saying to her was prevented by surprise at the change with regard to partners—"why how is this?" he said—"I thought, Miss Audley, you had promised to dance with the gentle-

man for whom I solicited the honour of your hand?"

"Yes, I believe I might, sir," said Lavinia, composedly, "but I changed my mind since I came into the room."

"And pray may I take the liberty of inquiring why?"

"Because I liked dancing better with sir Edward Surrey than the gentleman you asked me for."

"Hem!" said the baronet, coughing a little, "more blunt than polite this, it must be confessed.—Well, and, fair lady, pray are you always in the habit of doing what is most agreeable to yourself?"

"Yes, when I can."

"And do you," he hesitated a little, "think this is always the most eligible plan to be pursued?"

"I don't know—it is the pleasantest.—Yes, but what is pleasantest is not always the safest; that is what I know you were going to say, sir," she said, laughing saucily in his face, as she turned away to join

in the figure with the couple that were leading down.

"So, so," thought sir William; "I think there will be some little exercise for my friend here, if he takes this young lady in charge himself." Then crossing over to Melville—"Why how is this, my friend?" he cried; "you do not seem to have played your cards well with this Hebe of mine, that she gave you up for sir Edward."

"So it seems, sir," said Melville.

"Can you guess why it is she preferred sir Edward? for of the two," and the baronet laughed, "I should have conceived that you stood the best chance of pleasing her."

"Thank you, sir," said Melville, in the same kind of tone, "for the flattering compliment; what a high one to allow me to think I could at all enter into competition with the baronet! but as to your question, I really," a little evasively, "*cannot* answer it."

"Only you are utter strangers to one another," said sir William, "I really should

have conceived there was some kind of quarrel between you, that, in short, you had given her some kind of offence; for, after all, I cannot think the bluntness with which she replied to my question about you natural to her. With all her apparent giddiness, there is an elegance and feminine delicacy about her that forbids the idea; besides, I thought I discerned, while speaking to me, something malicious lurking in that dimpling smile of hers."

"Oh! I dare say you did," said Melville, a little spitefully; "it is not singular for a flattered young beauty, I believe, to have pleasure in the idea of being able to give pain."

"You allow then that she is a beauty?" said sir William, as if he had only attended to that part of the observation from which this inference was drawn.

"Yes," but as if almost reluctantly, assented Melville, "I suppose I should be deemed singular if I did not."

"Why yes, I rather think you would;

for, in my opinion, she is a sweet pretty creature, and then so playful."

"Oh, yes, playful enough, I believe, and mischievous too, I fancy, might be added," said Melville, in an under tone.

"She's a kind of creature that one could hardly know, without feeling a high degree of interest about," resumed sir William.

Melville was very much inclined to be of the same opinion; but not liking exactly to have this known, he affected carelessness, smiled, nodded, and looked about him, as if more engrossed by what was going on than what he was listening to; then, but with rather a vacant air—"True, as you were saying, sir, it would indeed be impossible, at least for those acquainted with her connexions; and I—I—think," anxious to know a little more about her family than he yet did, "you said you were intimate with them?"

"Me!—Yes, very—that is with the friend who introduced her to us, and bespoke our kindness for her. Yes, I am

very intimate with him; and on his account both my family and I are most particularly anxious to be of service to her on her introduction into life.—But if I keep you much longer abstracted in this way from Miss Bond, she will be telling me this was not the kind of *politesse* she was accustomed to when she was in Paris; and besides, there's a whist-party waiting for me in the card-room; so adieu for the present, and I hope, before the dance is over, you'll let the young lady see what a loss she has sustained, by not keeping her promise about you."

The young lady, however, seemed determined to appear to regret nothing but that she had ever known the disgraced Melville. If, notwithstanding her studious avoidance of his glances, their eyes would perversely encounter, hers were always sure to be instantly turned away with a look of scorn; in vain too was her hand sought in the evolutions of the dance; and in short, Melville began to be seriously alarmed.

While matters were going on in this way between them, Donaghue was anxiously watching the attentions of lord Altidore to Eveleen, who opened the ball with him, he and major Mackenzie being stewards. Young Millicent was Donaghue's partner, to the utter rage and disappointment of lady Jane, who, being determined on making what may be called a dead set at him this night, had refused several solicitations, previous to his entering the ball-room, for her hand, and amongst others, one from Lawless, under the pretext of being engaged; so that, on being defeated in her plan of obtaining him for a partner, she was obliged to sit still, with every probability of being obliged to do so for the remainder of the evening, from the offence she saw her conduct had given, it being now discovered that her rejection of so many partners was owing to her reserving herself for some particular person, contrary to the established rules of assemblies. But it was not

entirely on this account she was so exasperated by his conduct, though it was quite sufficient to provoke her with it, to think it might be the means of making her appear neglected, a thing hardly endurable to her, from her wish to be thought the object of general attention every where. Should Donaghue persevere much longer in acting in this manner, she thought it hardly possible but that lady Erin must become undeceived, with regard to him; and what a deathblow might not this be to every future hope! She had been on the watch for him from the moment she entered the room, and the instant she saw him approaching, she started up, and whispering to lady Erin that she had received a written entreaty that morning to make it up with him this evening, seized his arm, and ere he was well allowed to pay his compliments to the party, whirled him from them.—"I have been so anxiously expecting you, Donaghue," she said, as she forced him to parade her down the room, "being disappointed of seeing

you yesterday, and not knowing but that I might be equally so when you next called—and I really wanted to—to——" (she was for a moment at a loss to say what)—" to scold you," she then suddenly added, " for those abominable complaints you are continually making of me to lady Erin, getting me, in consequence, such long sermonizing lectures from her."

" I make complaints of you to lady Erin!" said Donaghue; " surely, my dear lady Jane, you must have been dreaming to think so; for I cannot imagine her ladyship could possibly assert what was not the case."

" No, I don't positively say she asserted it, but then from her continual lectures——"

" On what score could I possibly complain of you?" resumed Donaghue. " Complaint implies some right of interference, or sense of injury, and I neither pretend to one, nor suffer under the other; and should, in short, conceive myself guilty of a very unwarrantable liberty if I could

presume to mention your name in the manner you have insinuated to lady Erin."

"Donaghue, how can you talk in this way?" cried her ladyship—"how persevere in still trying to deceive yourself and me? Do you think I don't know, notwithstanding all this loftiness of language, that you still feel as if I had once wronged you, and that to this is owing all your variations of conduct towards me, and the jealousy and resentment with which you behold the slightest appearance of encouragement from me to the particularity of any other person—a jealousy and envy so apparent, as certainly to appear like indirect complaints, at least to any one who notices them, amongst which number is lady Erin?"

Donaghue only replied to this speech by a smile of derision; he would not allow her to suppose he deemed it worthy of any other reply; and to make her still more perfectly comprehend the feeling inspired by this attempt to persuade him out of his senses, immediately proceeded to re-

mark, that dancing would now soon commence, as the gentlemen had begun drawing for places.

"Well, no matter," said her ladyship, hardly able to control her rage at this cool contemptuous indifference, for so she construed it, "you are not very anxious about yours, I suppose; so there's no occasion to be in a hurry to rejoin the party."

"Pardon me," said Donaghue, impatient to avail himself of the pretext he had for disengaging himself from her, "I should consider it a bad compliment to any lady who might honour me with her hand, if I did not feel a little anxious about the place I had secured for her in the set."

"Oh, well," and under the flattering persuasion that his expressing himself in this way was an indirect intimation of his considering that they were to be partners for the first set, lady Jane was beginning to declare, that so she liked her partner, she cared very little, except on certain occasions, when there was any thing of arrogant pretensions, what place she occupied

in a set, when Donaghue, having led her back to her seat, withdrew his arm, and directly turning to Millicent, asked her hand.

The feelings that at this instant pervaded the soul of lady Jane were almost beyond suppression; and lady Erin's whispering her, as she conceived, with a sneer, though in conceiving so she certainly did her injustice, did not assuredly tend to allay them.

Whatever were the resolutions of Donaghue, with regard to the avoidance of any particularity to Miss Erin, he certainly had not the fortitude to retain them, when, at the conclusion of the first set, he found himself seated beside her, without any one to interfere in their conversation but Millicent, sir William and lady Erin being engaged in the card-room, the rest of the party scattered, and lord Altidore obliged, by his duties as a steward, to leave her soon after conducting her to her seat.

How long was it since he had had an opportunity of gazing on her—of conver-

sing with her without restraint! but what happiness, what pleasure could he derive from this, when he dared not profit by it? As if to heighten the feelings this reflection inspired, the place, the scene, revived the recollection of the folly to which all this misery was owing; for in this very room how slightingly had he once treated her, from the ungenerous belief that he might trifle as he pleased with her feelings with impunity! The deep, deep sigh that unconsciously escaped him, at the moment, seemed to startle Miss Erin. She turned with quickness towards him from Millicent, to whom she was speaking at the moment; and Donaghue coloured like scarlet at her look of mingled alarm and inquiry.—"This—this room," he said, as if replying to it, "is so—so warm," affecting, as he spoke, in extreme confusion, to rub back his hair from his temple.

"If you find it oppressive, had you not better repair to the card-room?" said Miss

Erin. "Go, and see how Fortune is favouring my mother."

"No," replied Donaghue, in a melancholy tone, and with a look that perfectly assimilated to it, "she has for an instant favoured me, and I will not slight her kindness."

"Certainly not; you would be wrong if you did," said Miss Erin, laughingly, as if treating what he had said as the indirect compliment of common-place gallantry. "But is not our assembly here very brilliant to-night? The assemblage here gives encouragement to the plan of having subscription balls more immediately in our neighbourhood than these the ensuing winter, and which you must hold yourself in readiness to be called upon to patronize."

"Nothing could afford me greater pleasure," replied Donaghue, "than to concur in any plan or scheme that could promote sociability; but Heaven knows before next winter where I shall be!"

"Be!" repeated Miss Erin. "Why,"

in a tone of earnestness, "you are not going to leave Altoir-na-Grenie?"

"I should have done so before this, but that I rather wished not till the return of general O'Donaghue from abroad; but as that now appears very uncertain, I certainly shall not pass another winter at it, as I really have not courage to endure for another its lonely horrors."

There was some slight indication of emotion in the manner of Miss Erin; she paused for a minute, and seemed thoughtful; then, again addressing him—"But are you not rather to blame yourself," she said, but rather hesitatingly, "for finding it so lonely? There's a pleasant neighbourhood."

"There is," said Donaghue; "but can you not well imagine, that the sight and enjoyment of domestic happiness abroad, must render a solitary home still more dismal?"

Miss Erin was again silent for an instant.—"Yes, I believe I can," she then

said; "but—but—" and her accent again became a little hesitating, "might not yours," half glancing at him, "be very different from a solitary home, if you pleased yourself? If—if—you would but forgive what was——"

Donaghue cast up his eyes impatiently; he could not permit her to proceed—"Pardon me for interrupting you," he said, "but I cannot check my emotion, when I hear myself still suspected of what I have so peremptorily denied. I perfectly comprehend your allusion, but, believe me, it is all a mistake, what is imagined of my ever having been attached to lady Jane, and that to anger and resentment is owing my not now acknowledging that attachment. I conceive it due to her, as well as myself, to declare this, lest the continuance of the error respecting us should be the means of preventing a happy alliance elsewhere. How could I possibly feel anger or resentment at what, to me, was a matter of total unconcern? and with the conviction on my mind I have,

that I can never experience any particular interest about her, I should conceive myself the most despicable of human beings, indeed, if I could possibly lay myself out to win her regard." Donaghue expressed himself with as much delicacy as he could about her ladyship—"Do not—do not, therefore," he added; and as her hand lay temptingly in his way, his ventured to touch it, to give greater emphasis, perhaps, to his words—"do not, after this, wound my—vex me, by letting me imagine you still discredit me; but surely—surely—" with an emotion that was not controllable, "you are the last being on earth who should have believed what has been insinuated—you, who——"

"Me!" cried Miss Erin; "and pray——" but her deep blush, at the instant, she felt but too conscious had betrayed her perfect comprehension of his meaning to permit her to finish the question.

"Yes, you," said Donaghue, as if he had heard it, transported out of himself by the soft confusion of her looks—"you!"

again gently seizing her hand, in one moment of emotion forgetting all the resolves of pride and romantic generosity, and a hundred other absurd notions, as perhaps they might be termed; and from the agitation of the lady, and the impassioned feelings of the gentleman, there is no knowing what *eclaircissement* might have ensued, had not, at this very critical moment, a young lady run across the room, to speak to Miss Erin.

Donaghue, as she hastily withdrew her hand from him, turned away his head, to conceal his vexation at this interruption, and the next instant, without Miss Erin having an idea of what the occasion of it could be, her attention at the moment being occupied by the young lady who had come up to her, he started from her side, and rushed towards the tea-room.

Lady Jane, on finding herself compelled to sit the first set, in order to prevent the mortifying circumstance as much as possible from being remarked, retired to this room, the entrance to which was

nearly close to the seat now occupied by Miss Erin, and just within which she placed herself, for the purpose of seeing all that was passing without. Keenly watchful of every movement of Donaghue and Miss Erin, she no sooner saw they were, as it might be said, left to themselves, than she maliciously determined on instantly joining them; this determination, however, was prevented by her admirer, Lawless, as great a coxcomb as ever figured on the *pavé* in Bond-street, and who having followed her from London on a speculating plan, was excessively enraged by her equivocal, or, as he termed it, jilting conduct towards him.

Quite as watchful of her as she was of Donaghue, on seeing her enter the tea-room, he also took his station there, but without deigning to seem to notice her, so much was he offended by her refusing to dance with him, from her expectation of being asked by Donaghue, as it was now evident was the case, till he saw her rising to quit it, when, aware of her motive for

doing so, he rushed forward, and placed himself in the doorway in such a manner as to prevent her passing.

"Pshaw! what folly is this?" she cried. "Really you are vastly disagreeable to-night, Lawless. Stand aside, I desire, and let me pass!"

"No, I am too good-natured for that—it would only be to let you spoil sport to do so; and if you had that regard for the gentleman you profess, or at least evince, you certainly would not endeavour to prevent his trying his chance with the heiress, now that the old fox that watches her is out of the way."

In expressing himself in this manner, Mr. Lawless was not exactly aware there was any one but lady Jane to hear him, or he probably would have been a little more cautious in his language. It happened, however, that Melville was at his elbow at the very moment, deliberating whether or not he should address himself any more to Lavinia that evening, and his rage at what he overheard—the inso-

lence of the allusion to Donaghue, was so great, that nothing but prudential considerations—the injury it might be to Donaghue, to make him the subject of a quarrel, could have induced the suppression of it.

Not to give way in some degree, however, to his indignation, was utterly impossible; and he accordingly made the impertinence of Lawless to lady Jane the pretext.—"Why don't you stand out of the way, sir," said he, "when her ladyship wishes to pass?"

"Sir!" cried the other, somewhat startled, however, at finding he had been so near him all this time, but trying to conceal this under a tone of bravado.

"I say, sir, how can you possibly have the insolence to obstruct any one's passage from one room to another? Your conduct is excessively indecorous; and if you don't immediately remove yourself, I shall take the liberty of doing so!"

"Upon my soul!" with a laugh, but evidently a forced one, "that is very good,

as if I would permit; but, to be sure, there's nothing like——"

"Keeping one's word," said Melville, catching him by the arm as he spoke, and dragging him from the door.

The rage of the other, at so utter a discomfiture before lady Jane, was so great, that, transported beyond all considerations of prudence, he was in the act of paying Melville for his hasty ejectment of him from the doorway by a blow, when Donaghue, whose eye was attracted towards the spot at the instant, rushed forward to prevent him, by seizing his arm, just at the moment that Miss Erin's attention being called away from him, she was startled by seeing him dart off in such a manner.

All was now tumult; lady Jane screamed; Lawless, finding there was some one to interfere, affected to bluster, and every one came crowding to the spot; while Miss Erin, terrified beyond expression, tremblingly demanded what the matter was?

"Oh, I—I," cried lady Jane, purposely making her way to her, determined on trying whether she could not make something of this incident—"I am the unfortunate cause of all this!"

"You!" said Miss Erin, perhaps wilfully wishing not to understand her.

"Yes, I indeed," and affecting to tremble as if she required support, she passed her arm under the really trembling Eveleen's. "But I guessed how it would be; I guessed the evening would hardly pass over without a burst between these hot-headed creatures."

"What hot-headed creatures?" asked Eveleen.

"My dear, how can you pretend ignorance — I beg pardon—not instantly to guess who I mean?—Donaghue, to be sure, and Lawless. Yet I certainly have not been to blame, as I did all I could to keep peace between them, by refusing to dance with either, lest the other should be jealous, and so lost the first set entirely; but, as I dreaded, all wouldn't do—

Donaghue is of so terribly jealous a temper. Didn't you see how he was watching me all the time he was conversing with you—that his eyes were continually in the direction of the tea-room, because he saw Lawless had stationed himself near the seat I had taken—just taken within the door?"

"No, I cannot exactly say I did perceive his eyes continually in that direction," replied Miss Erin, turning upon her such a look of involuntary keen scrutiny as, notwithstanding all her effrontery, made her blush—a circumstance, however, that could do her no injury, as it could not be perceived.

"Indeed! Oh, well, that was because you were not always minding him; but you see, the moment your being engaged with another person gave him an opportunity for interrupting me and Lawless, as he conceived, he embraced it; and, Heavens! like an enraged tiger positively he came down upon the poor fellow.—But how you tremble, my dear! Really, I

believe my tremour has been contagious," and she begged some of the company, that impeded them, to make way, and getting Eveleen to a window, she presently recovered herself.

She had felt a shock indeed, but it was but momentary—that shock which a mind of integrity cannot help feeling, if it conceives itself wilfully imposed upon by a person whom it wishes to be allowed still to esteem. She could not believe it possible, that Donaghue could be guilty of the deliberate insincerity of which she must accuse him, if she gave credit to this statement of lady Jane, or of ungenerously seeking to revive former sentiments, as certainly had appeared to be the case, for the mere purpose of making her instrumental to revenging the perfidy of another; and in proportion as she acquitted him, she felt dislike to the person who had surprised her into a transient injustice towards him.

Her looks were too intelligent not to let lady Jane, keenly penetrating as she

was, discover the distrust she had excited, and how to overcome it became now her object, since, if there was an end to any further belief of Donaghue's entanglement with her, she feared there was an end to any further hopes of preventing the union she had made so many exertions, or rather had had recourse to many artifices to try and hinder, from the explanations that, in that case, it was too probable would take place.

Whilst revolving the matter, Donaghue was in no little agitation, from the answer he had heard her give to Miss Erin's inquiry, well aware of the invidious inference to be drawn from it.

The matter about Lawless was brought to a speedy issue. Lord Altidore, as one of the stewards, came forward, and insisted on his either apologizing to the parties he had offended, and the company in general, for the indecorum of which he had been guilty, or instantly withdrawing; and Lawless, not sorry to have a plausible pretext for making that apology to Mel-

ville, without which he rather argued disagreeable consequences to himself, very readily permitted himself to be prevailed on to do what was required.

The moment the bustle attendant on this *fracas* had subsided, Donaghue went to seek Miss Erin. The room was extremely crowded, so much so, as to prevent his directly seeing from one part to another; and while he was looking about him, near the tea-room, to try if he could catch a glimpse of her, lady Jane approached, with one of the Miss Magennises, for whom she had purposely left Miss Erin, in order that she might be at liberty to watch for him. She no sooner saw him, than withdrawing her arm from her companion, she darted to him, and catching hold of him—"So this silly affair is over!" she cried. "Really Lawless's conduct has been quite preposterous; and then so very provoking, from the errors and mistakes I dare say it will be the means of occasioning. I had the greatest difficulty in the world, in trying to make——But

we are in the way," and she drew him back towards the entrance of the tea-room, which was now quite vacated, "in making Miss Erin believe that you were not concerned in the quarrel; and from explaining who was, and all about it, I suppose, before to-morrow, your friend Melville will have the honour of being set down as one of my admirers."

"And you really did explain how it was to Miss Erin?" said Donaghue, looking earnestly at her.

"To be sure I did. I am sure you must have overheard my telling her I was the cause of it, and I naturally explained how much I was indebted to Melville for making that puppy Lawless regret his insolence. But I see you are impatient to be gone, as dancing will soon be recommencing; and I am in a hurry indeed myself to go to the card-room, where there is a loo-party waiting for me, as I shan't dance to-night; so here, take my hand, let what passed in the early part of the evening be forgotten, and

give me the pleasure of thinking that—that as a *friend* I may at least consider you!"

"Most assuredly, most decidedly," cried Donaghue, in the generous warmth of his heart, affected by the well-counterfeited emotion she betrayed at the instant, and delighted to think that no injury had been done him with Miss Erin, and eagerly taking her offered hand as he spoke, he was in the very act of raising it to his lips, with a look that might well have been taken for one of real tenderness, when his eyes encountered Miss Erin's full upon him. He started, and with a feeling of indescribable confusion, let drop the hand of lady Jane.

Miss Erin smiled superciliously, and, with a slight nod to lady Jane, passed on with her party.

Alarmed by this smile, Donaghue turned to lady Jane, and in her countenance, at the moment, read such an expression of malicious triumph, as left him no room to doubt his agitation being the result of

treachery on her side. Nor was he mistaken in the persuasion; she had been aware, all along, from the direction in which she stood, of the approach of Miss Erin; and to her perceiving that her eyes were upon them, was owing her having made the effort she had done to draw him into some appearance of tenderness towards her.

Incensed, disgusted, Donaghue quitted her, without another moment's delay, and was involuntarily hastening after Miss Erin, when he encountered Millicent and Miss Bond. She took his arm, and in her way proceeded to detail the whole of what lady Jane had told her cousin of his jealousy being the cause of the recent *fracas;* and, from her detail, Donaghue at once saw what the plan of lady Jane was, in betraying him into the appearance of attachment she had just done; he feared its success; from the manner in which she had managed, it certainly would seem as if she had been sought for the purpose of a reconciliation taking place between them,

and he could have gnashed his teeth in downright exasperation of spirit, at the idea of being her dupe. But could he obtain an opportunity of conversing with Eveleen again before the evening was over, she might be defeated; and under this hope, he now hurried forward his fair companions to join her. On coming up with her—"I almost fear," said Donaghue, "I am too late for this set; but if, for the one after, you are disengaged, may I entreat——"

"I am engaged not only for this set, but for as many after as, I believe, will be danced this evening, or, at least, as I conceive will be agreeable to me to dance," she replied, abruptly interrupting him, and slightly bowing, passed on.

Donaghue resigned the arm of Millicent, who immediately followed her cousin, and, in utter disconsolation, then turned away.

The artifices of lady Jane, it was now too evident, had prevailed, and in succeed-

ing in them, she had succeeded in rendering him an object of derision and contempt to Eveleen, through silly spleen and jealousy, denying what the next moment he was ridiculously anxious to proclaim. The idea was not endurable, yet endure it he must, for he now saw no way of vindicating himself from the imputation he had incurred but by quitting the neighbourhood, and on this he determined; but at what a moment to do so, when Eveleen had appeared relenting towards him, from a persuasion on her mind, perhaps, that if it were as he had represented, matters might yet, possibly through the interference of her mother, be brought to a happy issue between them!

Dancing recommenced, but he neither heard the music nor saw the dancers, and, in short, was so completely lost at the moment as he walked down the room, that he did not perceive Melville till he caught him by the arm.—"What, so *triste!*" he said; "why you look like the knight of

the rueful countenance, Donaghue! what the deuce is the matter?"

"I do not know; what should you suppose the matter?" replied Donaghue, a little impatiently.

"Oh, this love—this love!" said Melville, laughing, though certainly not without being a little internally vexed himself at the moment. "Upon my soul, I am beginning to think it was no bad plan that of some monks I read of in this isle of ours, in former times, forbidding the approach of any woman to their sacred precincts! for, assuredly, if she is the source of all that is divine in our joys, she is also the cause of all that is tormenting in our sorrows. But come, what really has happened to discompose you in this manner? confess, for who knows but your inquietude may meet with greater sympathy than you are aware of?" And, in short, he could no longer refrain from communicating to him the affair about Lavinia.

With all his vexation, Donaghue could

not help laughing as he listened to him; but though involuntarily diverted by it, this did not prevent his commenting on the imprudence of it, aware, as Melville must be, of the consequences that might result from disobliging his uncle, and which nothing seemed more likely to occasion his doing than forming an attachment without his sanction.

"Come, come," said Melville, a little vexedly, at length interrupting him, "have done with this sermonizing, which only goes to prove how deucedly wise we are when we come to consider the affairs of others."

"Thank you for the inference," said Donaghue, laughing; "but supposing it be as you have intimated, it is not so wonderful after all, since in considering the affairs of others, we have not those feelings of passion and prejudice to blind and pervert our judgments, that is too often the case when our own are under review."

"Very well explained indeed," said Melville, "the cause of our being so much

wiser with regard to others than ourselves, and a very appropriate scene this for discussion and argument; but——" and touching his arm, Donaghue perceived Miss Erin and her party approaching, the second set being just concluded. A slight bow was the only mark of recognition as she passed, and even this Melville could not obtain from Lavinia, whose conduct had disconcerted him so much as to prevent his dancing the second set. He had almost decided upon making no further attempt to converse with her that evening, but on seeing her pass, he could not resist withdrawing his arm from Donaghue to follow her. Lavinia perceiving this, not without a little secret exultation perhaps, immediately affected to be most busily engaged in conversing with Miss Bond, on whose arm she was leaning, separated from Miss Erin by the gentleman with whom Miss Erin had been dancing. —"And so," she cried to Miss Bond, who had forgiven her the supposed mistake that robbed her of sir Edward for the first set,

on perceiving that she evinced no anxiety whatever to monopolize him—"so all this recent *fracas* was about that painted thing!"

"Painted thing!" repeated Miss Bond, with great earnestness—"painted thing! Yes, to be sure, lady Jane paints; but, when I was in Paris, every body painted, and nobody thought any thing of it; I began to rouge myself while I was there, but grandmamma made me give it up when I came home."

"She was quite right," said Lavinia; "it will be time enough for you to rouge forty or fifty years hence, when you want to look young."

"But lady Jane is young."

"Yes, but not so young, I suppose, as she wishes to look."

"And very handsome," resumed Miss Bond, "at least the gentlemen think her so; but, for my part, were she seven times handsomer than she is, I couldn't like her, she is so cross and disobliging at times. Why the other night, at Mr. O'Connor's—where, by-the-bye, I quite

wished to have been introduced to you, and that pretty girl that was with you, you both took my fancy so much—if I had died for it, she would not wait to let me have one dance, though she knows I am so passionately fond of dancing, and had put on one of my Paris dancing dresses for the very purpose. I declare I cried with vexation, both then and afterwards, when I heard what a pleasant dance there was there."

"Who told you that?" demanded Lavinia.

"Who told me! I protest I don't recollect; but some one I know did."

"Then I assure you they told you what was not correct, at least I thought nothing could be more disagreeable, for, not to appear too fastidious, I consented to go down one dance, and I got such a lout of a partner——"

Here Melville, who had kept close behind them, as she was indeed aware of, coughed.

"Bless me, Mr. Melville!" exclaimed

Miss Bond, "I did not know you were so near us; and now I think on it, as I suppose you have heard what we have been saying, there was a young man at the entertainment we were speaking of, that you have ever since very much put me in mind of, the only difference between you was his eyebrows being very black and somewhat bushy," as was the case indeed, when she observed him, but not exactly so when Lavinia did, the black about them being, by degrees, carelessly brushed away.

"Ah, that was my partner!" said Lavinia; "and yet," half turning round, and casting an affectedly careless glance at Melville, "I think there was a great likeness between the fright I danced with and this gentleman."

"Thank you for the compliment, ma'am!" said Melville, with a profound bow; "let no one who has heard it wonder, after this, if I should be vain."

Miss Bond laughed immoderately, nor

could Lavinia, with all her efforts to pre vent herself, help joining in her mirth.

Encouraged by this, Melville made a gentle effort to insinuate himself between them, and make each take an arm. Miss Bond most readily acquiesced in the plan, but on his attempting to make her companion, Lavinia darted round to the other side.

"Don't you like him?" asked Miss Bond, in a low tone, as Lavinia took her other arm.

"Like him!" repeated Lavinia, colouring, and stammering at the question—"no! why? what makes you ask?"

"Why, because your saying what you just did, and your not accepting his arm, makes me think you don't; and yet that seems so odd to me, as, I assure you, he is reckoned amongst our very handsomest and most elegant *beaux* here."

"Indeed!" said Lavinia, composedly, perceiving he was attentively listening; "well, really I should hardly have thought

that; but some people have very singular tastes."

Melville now suddenly thought what a little alarming Lavinia might effect; he clearly saw, with all her appearance of anger and disdain, that she was gratified by his following her about in this manner, and he suddenly decided on altering his conduct; accordingly, ere they had proceeded many steps further, he begged Miss Bond to excuse his leaving her, and, with his usual bow to her, and as distant a one as he could possibly make to Lavinia, he turned away with an air of perfect carelessness, and rejoined Donaghue, whom he found, by this time, anxious to depart, the disturbance of his mind rendering it impossible for him to derive any further entertainment from the scene.

Melville, however he might have liked to linger a little longer in the room, made no objection, conceiving his positively quitting it might be a means of furthering his plan about Lavinia. The only thing that seemed likely to prevent their imme-

diately withdrawing, was the apprehended disinclination of Rosebud, who had accompanied them, to give up cards so soon. On repairing, however, to the card-room, to apprize him of their wish, they found him quite as ready to be gone as they were, owing to an excessive run of bad luck, which always completely disconcerted him.

Donaghue remained in so unhappy a state of mind, that on his companions quitting him for the night, he repaired to the library, instead of following their example, by retiring to his chamber. He took up a book, but quickly threw it aside, too unsettled to be able to read. He was mechanically pacing the apartment, completely lost in revolving the embarrassing predicament in which the artifices of lady Jane had placed him, when he perceived the door gently opening, and the dark visage of a man obtruding into the room. Donaghue darted to the door; the man started back, and fled before him

down the passage communicating with the chapel.

Donaghue was rapidly pursuing him, when an unexpected interruption was put to his further pursuit, by the sudden apparition of the figure, in the dress of his kinsman Dennis, before him. Seeming to dilate itself in the passage to obstruct his proceeding, it motioned him back, with gestures indicative of the greatest anxiety to prevent his doing so. Donaghue became transfixed for a moment, partly thro' surprise, and partly from incertitude whether or not these gestures were to be attended to, when the voice of Cormick, muttering to himself in broken sentences, as he came rushing down the staircase that led into this passage, made him involuntarily glance upwards, and when he turned round again the figure was gone.

Well, this was really most extraordinary; and he was looking about him, with the vagueness of a person that hardly knew what to think, when the corporal, who, with his great horse-cloak about him, had

nearly sprung down the whole of the last flight of stairs, on seeing him in the passage, recalled him to himself, by his loudly demanding whether he had seen him?

"Seen who?" demanded Donaghue, yet a little struck by the question, from what had just occurred.

"The ould gentleman, to be sure, in the yellow dress," replied the corporal; "there is no one else but him that disturbs the castle."

"No!" said Donaghue, affecting a carelessness he did not exactly feel at the instant; "I know not how that can be said, considering the extraordinary manner in which you appear to be acting yourself now, starting out of your bed, when it might be supposed you were quietly asleep, and——but before we argue the point further, have the goodness to assist me in securing the door to the chapel, which I must beg you may be more particular about in future, as I have every reason to imagine your forgetting to fasten it to-night was near costing me my life;" and

he recounted what had happened—that is, his being surprised by the appearance of a man in the passage, but, of course, nothing about the gentleman in the yellow dress.

Cormick, blessing himself, protested that this door was the one that, of all others, he was particular about in the castle, and that he could safely swear, by any saint, or all the saints, in the calendar, that he had, as usual, fastened it that night.

"Then it must have been broke open," said Donaghue; a very slight examination, however, sufficed to let them see that this had not been the case; and, of course, from the consequent conviction of its having been opened on the inside, no doubt could remain of treachery of some kind having been practised.

"Well," said Donaghue, on his return to the library, not a little curious to learn the circumstance to which it was owing, "let me know, now, the occasion of your strange question to me, Cormick, as to whether I had seen the old gentleman

that, let him haunt what he will, certainly haunts your imagination?"

"Why, your honour, because if there be faith in the word of a sinner, I had a glimpse of him myself to-night; and I am now certain, from what your honour has told me, that there is something keeping watch over you."

"I should be very sorry indeed not to be certain of that myself," replied Donaghue; "I hope, and firmly believe indeed, there is a good and merciful Providence watching over us all—that keepeth watch about our bed, and about our paths, and," looking a little slyly at the corporal, "spieth out all our ways."

"Yes, that I know, your honour, but that is not what I exactly meant by what I just said; I meant, that I am sure the spirit of your uncle Dennis troubles the castle on your account, and that my being roused out of my sleep to-night, since I find your honour was not in your chamber yourself to ring the bell in it, was for

the purpose of having me come to your assistance."

"Explain yourself," said Donaghue, certainly with some indication of anxiety, so curious appeared this declaration, from what he had himself seen.

"Why I was fast asleep, your honour, when I was suddenly woke, as I was a few nights ago, by your honour's chamber bell," began the corporal.

"That bell appears to be quite an alarum-bell to you, Cormick," observed Donaghue; "but proceed."

"Well, your honour, I only waited to be certain I was not dreaming by hearing it again, to jump out of bed, when catching up my cloak, as the readiest thing to throw over me, I opened the door, and was rushing out, when—holy St. Patrick save and defend us!—there, as plain as I now see your honour, I saw the ghost of squire Dennis, in his beautiful rustling silk nightgown, gliding away from it; and, to be sure, I won't deny, that, at such a sight, I lost the power of moving, and

might not, perhaps, have recovered myself yet, but that I suddenly bethought me there must be something amiss, or I never would have been summoned in such a manner; and right enough it now seems I was, in thinking so; and after this, sure your honour cannot doubt the castle being troubled."

"It would be odd if I did," said Donaghue, "with such a restless being as you in it. However, as I do certainly think there has been something extraordinary going on in it to-night, I conceive you may as well stretch yourself on the couch in my room."

Cormick was not sorry at the proposal, as, after what had happened, he by no means relished the thought of going back to his own chamber. The object of Donaghue in making it, was to have his assistance in securing his nocturnal visitant, in case he should make his appearance again that night, which, all circumstances considered, he deemed not unlikely. The absurd idea to which he had at first im-

puted this, was now given up—to something infinitely more serious than he had at first imagined, his apparently keeping haunting him, as he did, was now ascribed. It struck him, from all that had occurred, his giving the alarm to Cormick at the very moment that he, Donaghue, was surprised in the library, and then interposing to prevent his pursuit of the ruffian into the chapel, which, unarmed as he was, Donaghue was now aware would have been highly imprudent, that he was a person acquainted with some scheme of villainy against him, and on the watch to prevent its being carried into effect. But as it was impossible he could always be on the alert for this purpose, Donaghue deemed it absolutely essential to endeavour to secure him, should he appear again, since he was evidently either afraid or disinclined (and the latter seemed to be the case, from the manner in which he had tried to allure him from his chamber) to reveal what he knew, except in some secret place.

Donaghue, having examined his pistols,

put on his nightgown, and merely threw himself on the bed, leaving a candle, as he had latterly been in the habit of doing, burning on a table at some little distance from it. The couch for the corporal he had placed immediately behind the closet-door, so that if his mysterious visitant should appear, and, as usual, advance into the chamber, he hoped, by having him stationed there, to have his retreat cut off. Of course, that no premature alarm should be given, he wished to enjoin the corporal to silence; but in vain he attempted to do so; ghosts were an exhaustless topic to Cormick; and though Donaghue even pretended sleepiness, for the purpose of inducing him to be silent, after having repeatedly ordered him, to no effect, to be so, he would continue to talk.—"Ah, then, your honour!" he suddenly cried, after a pause of some minutes, thus disappointing the hope Donaghue had been under of his having at last fallen asleep, "does your honour remember poor Ned Macguire, my comrade?"

"Yes," a little peevishly, replied Donaghue; "but what, in the name of wonder, has put him, poor fellow! into your head now?"

"Why, your honour, what we were talking about, speaking of ghosts, brought him to my mind, for there is a curious story about him and a ghost, the second night of the battle of Waterloo; but to make your honour understand it——"

"I don't want to understand it," said Donaghue; "and I desire, Cormick, you will hold your tongue; you are really very troublesome to-night, continuing to talk in this manner, when I have so often told you to be silent."

"Well, your honour, just let me tell you this story, and then I will go to sleep in earnest. As I was saying, to make the story of the ghost understood, I must inform your honour that Ned had a weak side, as who, indeed, is without one, as father Murphy often tells us in his sermons, in order to make us charitable to the failings of one another—poor Ned's

was having a mighty soft heart towards the fair sex; and after falling in love Lord knows how often, he fell in love again in his own town of Kilkenny—and, to be sure, it is he that used to uphold it, boasting to his comrades how it is there you would see fire without smoke, water without mud, and streets paved with marble—with a mighty pretty girl there by the name of Nelly Heron; but somehow, with all his love, he did not like to marry just then, but when he was taking leave of her to join his regiment, he bound himself, by all the oaths he could think of, never to make any one his wife but her, and Nelly, in return, said, if he proved false, he might be sure of her making away with herself, and haunting him."

"Hush!" cried Donaghue, raising himself on his elbow—"I thought I heard a noise."

"A noise!" repeated the corporal, after listening a moment—"tut, your honour! no! or if you did, it was only the rats scratching behind this old tapestry. Well,

to go on with my story, Ned swore to Nelly he would never marry any one but her, and, to be sure, being a poor, honest, well-intentioned fellow as ever lived, he would have kept his word, if nothing had tempted him to break it, but it so happened, that, in the place where he was quartered in England, he met with another mighty pretty creature of a girl, one Sarah Broadhurst, and she drew him on, and on, till poor Nelly was almost forgotten; when, however, it came to the point of going away, he shewed himself inclined to serve her as he had done the other, but faith it is in England the girls won't take promises for payments, so Miss Sarah said, off or on at once—marry, or quit for ever; and rather than lose her, Ned suffered himself to be forsworn to poor Nelly."

"Then there is an end of the story," said Donaghue; "so now go to sleep."

"An end! why I have said nothing of the ghost yet. Well, as your honour is so sleepy, to make a short story of a long one, as the saying is, ill news flies apace,

so Nelly was not long before she heard of what Ned had done, and no sooner did she hear it, than what did she do, but walk quietly and softly to the river at the foot of the castle and drown herself, leaving a letter for Ned, reproaching him for his perjury, and bidding him remember what she told him at parting; and sure enough she kept her word with him, for on the second night of the battle of Waterloo, as he was talking to one of his comrades, as they were resting on their arms, of the dismal sights they had seen that day, the blood that was spilled, and how many were now lying cold and stiff about them, that but the day before were as hearty as themselves, and not knowing but that, before the next night, it might be the case with themselves—as to be sure it was with poor Ned—there came up to him a figure in a white sheet, with a blue lanthorn."

"Have done with this nonsense, Cormick, I desire," said Donaghue, now out of all patience, "or I will positively turn you out of the room!"

"Well, I have done, your honour," and he rolled himself up in his great cloak, and settled himself to sleep.

Donaghue had neither wish nor inclination to follow his example: as he lay anxiously on the watch, he endeavoured to recollect whether he had ever given, even unintentionally, any cause for enmity—of intentionally having done so he at once acquitted himself; but he could not recall the slightest circumstance to mind, that even of this could induce him to accuse himself; yet that enmity was entertained against him, he could not bring himself to doubt, from what had recently occurred; and as he yielded to the conviction, the extraordinary circumstances that had taken place in Spain suddenly recurring to his recollection, he could not help believing, from never *but there* having had reason to imagine that he had a secret foe, that whoever was the occasion of what had befallen him there, was assuredly the contiver of whatever treachery was planned against him here.

This persuasion did not tend, as may well be imagined, to lessen his anxiety for the discovery he hoped to make, could he succeed in securing his mysterious visitant. In his impatience for an opportunity of doing this, he persuaded himself almost, at times, he heard noises; but still he found he had deceived himself, and was at length beginning to give up all hopes of his appearance that night in his chamber, when suddenly, his eye being kept fixed on it, he beheld him stealing with the greatest caution from the closet. —"Hallo! hallo, corporal!" he cried, instantly springing from the bed; and the corporal, accustomed to sudden alarms, from the life he had led as a soldier, was in a moment on his feet; but he only started on them in time to catch a glimpse of the figure retreating into the closet, not in time, as Donaghue had hoped, to intercept it.

"Has he tould your honour—has he tould you where his gould is hid?" de-

manded Cormick, staring wildly at Donaghue. "I think myself there can be but very little doubt but its in the vault underneath the prison, as the safest place; but what signifies guessing, when, to be sure, he has tould you about it?"

"Who and what are you talking about?" asked Donaghue, decided, by a minute's reflection, on not allowing Cormick to yet know what he actually thought, since the object for which he retained him in his chamber had not been accomplished, lest, through over anxiety and zeal about him, some premature alarm might be given, that might be the means of finally preventing what he wished.

"Holy saints! The ghost of squire Dennis to be sure! Hadn't I a glimpse of his yellow silk nightgown this instant, as he was vanishing away into the closet? and don't I know what he came for? don't I know that it was to get rest for himself, by discovering where his money is hid? and don't I know, besides, that it has always been believed, by every one about

here, that he would yet be the making of some one belonging to the castle, by yet telling them of it? and if ever he meant to do a kindness, this is the time, when there has been so much wrong and robbery out of doors; and people are yet quite young and hearty, and able to spend what they get with comfort and satisfaction to themselves and their friends."

"Take my advice, Cormick," said Donaghue, "and return to your coueh, for your head really seems bewildered, and you look, besides, as white as a ghost yourself, this instant." For, notwithstanding the corporal's delight at the discovery he persuaded himself had taken place, he could not help his nerves being a little affected by the extraordinary manner in which, as he conceived, it had been made. "I am ashamed to see a brave fellow, who stood undaunted at the whizzing of balls, and the flashing of sabres about his head, now shaking with fancies that would disgrace a nursery-maid."

"And I didn't see the ghost of squire Dennis," said the corporal, in a tone of disappointment, "nor hear him halloing to me to get up, and help you to dig for the gould?"

"Just as much as you now see mine, or hear me telling you to pull down the castle; so try to compose your spirits, by a little sleep; and remember, I charge you, not to let any thing that has occurred to-night, on any account whatever, transpire, for reasons which I shall hereafter explain; but the morning is now breaking, and as I really feel fatigued, I wish to get a little repose before the hour for rising."

The first thing that Donaghue did, the next morning after breakfast, was to take a stroll amongst the cabins in the neighbourhood, to try whether he could make a discovery of any stranger having been lately seen in it; but his inquiries, though made with the greatest caution, procured him no satisfaction; and he was very much inclined to believe, that he must depend

on his nocturnal visitant for the elucidation of what appeared so mysterious.

This belief confirmed the resolution he had by this time formed, of no more appearing to regard him with suspicion. Every matter considered, to do so any longer would, he conceived, be the height of egregious folly, since, if his purposes had been evil, in how different a manner would he assuredly have acted! The great hazard he had incurred of his life, by the manner in which he had obtruded himself on his notice, not only tended to convince Donaghue that there must be something very important to communicate, but that he must be a person actuated by no common feelings of interest about him; and finally he decided, against his next visit, for he made sure of seeing him again, on being prepared to follow him from his chamber, should he still seem determined on not making that the scene for revealing any thing to him.

His mind made up on this point, his thoughts gradually reverted to other mat-

ters, and impelled by anxiety and complaisance, he at length ordered his curricle, and drove to the Vale by himself, both his companions having taken themselves off immediately after breakfast—the doctor to scold with lady Magennis, over his ill luck of the preceding night, and Melville to see what might occur from a chance meeting with Lavinia.

END OF VOL. III.

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